

MAKING SENSE OF '**INTENTIONAL** **TEACHING**'



National
Alliance



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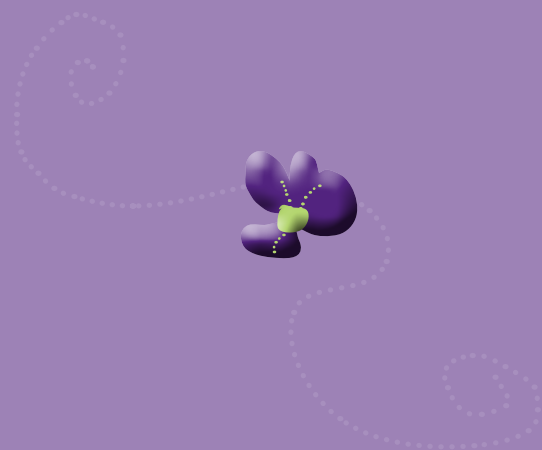
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Acknowledgement

Provocations on Assessment in Early Childhood Education and *Making Sense of 'Intentional Teaching'* are complementary resources to support educators to further engage with the *Early Years Learning Framework*. The concepts of assessment and intentional teaching can be challenging to understand but are most important elements of analyzing and appreciating children's learning.

This work is a collaboration between Semann & Slattery and Sally Barnes. These resources were developed on behalf of the Professional Support Coordinators Alliance (PSCA). They seek to support educators to investigate assessment and explore intentional teaching by breaking down the terminology into everyday language to support practical implementation of these skills.

We hope you enjoy these publications.

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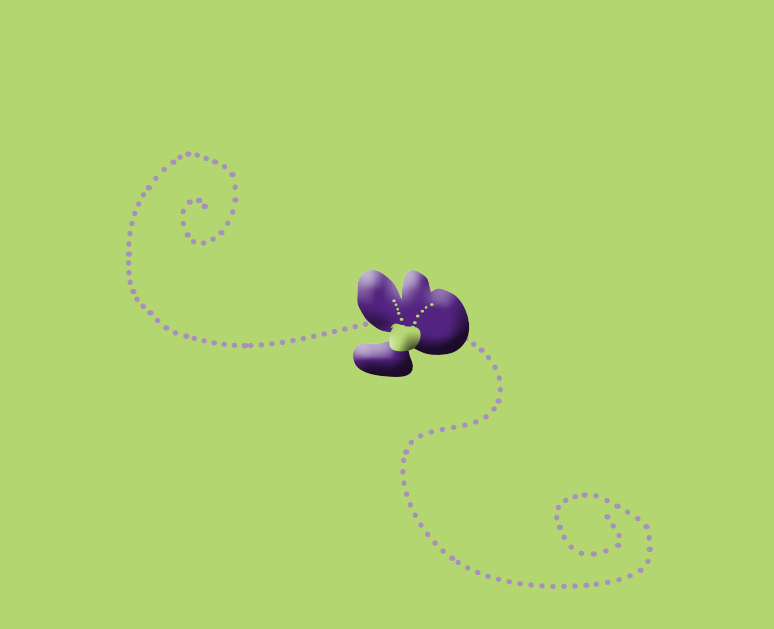
About the author

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Sally contributed to the development of the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework and was a member of the core writing team in the Charles Sturt University-led consortium that was tendered to write the Early Years Learning Framework.

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Introduction

The recently introduced *Early Years Learning Framework* challenges educators to think deeply about young children's learning. However, whilst the Framework reaffirms many existing practices and beliefs – including the centrality of relationships and the importance of partnerships with parents, play-based learning and the need for safe, stimulating and challenging learning environments – as central to quality practice in early childhood education, it has also 'departed from tradition' (Grieshaber, 2010) and introduced concepts and ideas that are much less familiar to the field.

This booklet is concerned with one of those ideas – the notion of intentional teaching. It offers a simple explanation of what is meant by the term 'intentional teaching' and explains why intentional teaching has been included as a pedagogical practice in the *Early Years Learning Framework*. There are some suggestions about what early childhood educators do when they are engaged in intentional teaching and an explanation for how early childhood educators can be intentional when interacting with children in a play-based curriculum.

As educators work their way through the ideas and concepts in this booklet, they should recognise that becoming an intentional educator is not something that happens overnight. Nor can it ever be the outcome of one training session. Rather, becoming an intentional educator is an ongoing process that begins when educators start to think deeply about what they do to support children's learning and reflect on the difference that they make in children's lives. It is hoped that this booklet will help educators to begin that journey.

Thinking about intentional teaching

What does the term 'intentional teaching' mean to you? When you hear someone use the term, what images, words and thoughts come to mind? Looking at these photographs, would you describe what is happening in any of them as 'intentional teaching'?

If you can, share your thoughts with your colleagues. What do they think the term 'intentional teaching' means? Do their understandings correspond with yours or do they contradict them? Is there anything that you would want to add to your definition after listening to your colleague's ideas?



In the context of the Early Years Learning Framework, what is meant by the term ‘intentional teaching’?

The term ‘intentional teaching’ means different things to many different people. For some, the term means formal or structured approaches to teaching and invokes images of an educator standing in front of a group of children and telling them what to do or an image of children sitting quietly at tables and completing work that has been set by an adult. For others, the term ‘intentional teaching’ means the same as the term ‘explicit teaching’. That is, it is understood as a specific teaching technique, one that is used by educators when they want children to learn a specific skill or concept. Understood in this way, the term ‘intentional teaching’ can invoke images of an educator teaching children facts or an image of children learning things primarily through rote and repetition.

For many educators, it is the focus on the educator and emphasis on structure and formality emphasised in both of these descriptions of intentional teaching that makes them wary of the concept. For others, there is doubt that the notion of intentional teaching can ever be compatible with a child-centred, play-based curriculum.

In the *Early Years Learning Framework*, however, the term ‘intentional teaching’ is not used to describe a specific approach to teaching (i.e. formal and structured) or a specific teaching technique. Rather, it is a term that is used to describe teaching that is purposeful, thoughtful and deliberate (DEEWR, 2009). In this definition it is the word intentional that is important since it assumes that an intentional educator is someone whose actions:

originate from careful thought and are accompanied by careful consideration of their potential effects. Thus an “intentional” teacher aims at clearly defined learning objectives for children, employs instructional strategies likely to help children achieve the objectives, and continually assess progress and adjusts the strategies based on that assessment’

(Epstein, 2007, p. 4).

One of the important things alluded to in this definition is that intentional teaching is not something

that can simply be observed. This is because what determines whether an educator is engaged in intentional teaching is not necessarily what the educator is doing but the thinking, or the intention, that sits behind the educator’s actions. In practice, this means that an educator who is sitting on the side of the sandpit observing children’s interactions without interacting him or herself may be engaged in intentional teaching whilst an educator who has organised the children into a group and is reading them a story might not be. This is because, as Epstein points out (2007, p. 4), it is ‘the teacher who can explain just why she is doing what she is doing [who] is acting intentionally – whether she is using a strategy tentatively for the first time or automatically from long practice, as part of an elaborate set up or spontaneously in a teachable moment’.



Reflection point

- In what ways has this explanation of ‘intentional teaching’ challenged or confirmed what you understand about the term?
- How would you now describe the notion of ‘intentional teaching’ to someone who is unfamiliar with the concept?

Why is there a focus on intentional teaching in the Early Years Learning Framework?

'Teaching' has rarely been the focus of debates or discussions about young children's learning and development in prior to school early childhood settings. Grieshaber (2008) attributes this to the dominance of developmental theories in the field, suggesting that the focus on children's learning and development in these theories has overshadowed concerns about teachers and teaching. For this reason, Grieshaber argues that the focus on educators and intentional teaching in the *Early Years Learning Framework* represents a significant 'departure from tradition' in early childhood education and care in Australia (Grieshaber, 2010). But what has prompted this shift?

At all levels of education, both in Australia and abroad, there is renewed interest in the role that educators play in improving learning outcomes for children and students. Recent research into teaching in schools has revealed teacher quality as a significant in-school factor for improving student learning outcomes (Bransford, Darling-Hammond & Le-Page, 2007). In early childhood education, the findings of the UK study, the Effective Pre-school and Primary Education (EPPE) project showed that there was a direct relationship between children's cognitive outcomes and 'the quantity and quality of the teacher/adult planned and initiated focused group work for supporting children's learning' (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010, p. 161). Further, the study revealed that good outcomes in general were achieved in settings where there was a mix between small group activities initiated by an educator and child-initiated play and where interactions between children and educators involved 'shared sustained thinking' and the use of 'open-ended questioning to extend children's thinking' (p. 161). Closer to home the E4Kids: Effective Early Educational Experiences study (2010-2015) that is currently underway in Brisbane, Melbourne, Shepparton and Mount Isa aims to identify the effect that participation in early childhood programs has on children's learning and development. What educators do to support children's learning and development, and the effectiveness of that support in terms of educational outcomes has already emerged as an important focus of the study (E4Kids, 2011 & 2012).

Underpinning this renewed interest in educators and the things that they do to support children's learning and development is a recognition that at all levels of education, there are significant differences

in the educational outcomes achieved amongst different groups of learners. The gap in educational achievement that currently exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is acknowledged in the introduction to the *Early Years Learning Framework*, along with a recognition that early childhood education plays a critical role in closing this gap. In addition, high expectations for all children and a concern for equity are identified in the framework as one of the principles that underpins practice that is designed to ensure that all children make progress in relation to the learning outcomes set out in the *Early Years Learning Framework* (DEEWR, 2009). Specifically, it is argued that educators must:

... recognise and respond to barriers to children achieving educational success. In response they challenge practices that contribute to inequities and make curriculum decisions that promote inclusion and participation of all children. By developing their professional knowledge and skills, and working in partnership with children, families, communities and other services and agencies, they continually strive to find equitable and effective ways to ensure that all children have opportunities to achieve learning outcomes

(DEEWR, 2009, pp. 12-13).

A key finding from research is that teaching that is thoughtful, purposeful and deliberate and educators who are aware of the impact of their teaching on children's learning (Reid, 2004), play an important role in redressing educational inequality in Australia.

Reflection point

- What do you know about educational disadvantage in Australia? Why do you think that some children are more disadvantaged than others?
- What do you think educators can do to improve children's learning outcomes?

So, what do intentional educators do?

Gronlund and Stewart (2011, p. 28) make the point that 'excellent [educators] in early childhood programs are intentional in all they do with and for children. They do not assume that children's development will happen without support, encouragement, and scaffolding or without presenting appropriate challenges for the children'. Here, Gronlund and Stewart are making three important points about intentional teaching:

- Firstly, that educators have an important role to play in facilitating children's learning and development. That is, that learning and development do not occur without the support of adults.
- Secondly, that intentional teaching, when it is understood as teaching that is purposeful, thoughtful and deliberate rather than as a structured or formal approach to teaching or as a specific technique, is not something that is done occasionally – it is an everyday, all the time affair; and
- Finally, that intentional teaching is, in effect, the opposite of teaching by rote and repetition – that is, doing things with children in a particular way just because they've always been done in that way, rather than with any thought about what children might learn from the experience or any consideration about whether there is a better and more meaningful ways for children to be exposed to similar ideas.

Although many educators assume that 'intentional teaching' refers only to the interactions that occur between educators and the children they are responsible for, Epstein (2007, p. 4) argues that intentional teaching means more than this, noting that:

intentional teachers are intentional with respect to many aspects of the learning environment, beginning with the emotional climate they create. They deliberately select equipment and materials and put them in places where children will notice and want to use them. In planning the program day or week, intentional teachers choose which specific learning activities, contexts and settings to use and when. And they choose when and how much time to spend on specific content areas and how to integrate them. All these teacher decisions and behaviors set the tone and substance of what happens in the [setting].



Reflection point

- What do you currently do to create a learning environment that enhances children's learning?
- Do you find some play areas are more appealing to children than others? What could you do to attract children to the areas that are currently under utilised?
- Does the structure of your day enable children to engage in long periods of uninterrupted play? If not, what could you do to ensure that children have time to engage deeply with what they are doing?
- Do the materials and resources provided for children encourage them to be imaginative and creative?



In addition to providing stimulating and imaginative learning environments and ensuring that children have adequate time to play, however, intentional teachers also:

1. Know the children that they work with

Intentional educators know the children that they work with. They know children as individuals – their needs, their strengths, their interests and their desires. However, they are also aware of the children as a group. They understand the dynamics, the relationships and the plays of power that occur on a daily basis in their setting.

Intentional educators acquire their understanding of children from multiple sources – from children themselves, from colleagues, from families – and they use what they have learnt about the children in their care to establish goals for their learning.

Reflection point

- How well do you know the children that you work with?
- How well do you understand the children as individuals and as a group?
- What do you currently do to ‘find out’ about the children in your care?
- If you could change one thing about your current approach to finding out about the children, what would it be? What would you do instead?

2. Reflect on their ‘gaze’

In a study in the late 1990s, Mac Naughton (1997) highlighted the ways in which our ‘gaze’ (meaning the way that we view children) as early childhood educators affects what we see and therefore what we respond to and how we respond when working with young children. She argued that the dominance of developmental theories in early childhood education meant that most educators viewed children only as developing individuals. She suggested that this could make educators oblivious to the ways in which children play for power in early childhood settings and the ways in which gender, race, class and ethnicity influence what children do and what they learn.

Intentional educators are conscious that what they observe might only tell a partial story of what is happening. They ask questions such as ‘Could there be another way to understand what is happening here’ and proceed to investigate the possibilities by talking with colleagues or by analysing their observations with different theoretical frames.

Reflection point

- How does your ‘gaze’ affect what you see and respond to in your centre?
- Do you only see children as developing individuals or do you have other ways of seeing and understanding children and what they do?

3. Are knowledgeable and articulate about what they want to achieve with and for children

Based on what they know about a child or group of children, intentional educators have a clear sense of what they hope to achieve. This means that they are able to 'incorporate challenging and achievable goals in all activities, daily routines and interactions with children' (Gronlund & Stewart, p. 28) and that 'they purposefully set up the environment, provide materials, and make numerous decisions so children can meet learning goals' (p. 28). In addition, they are able to explain to others what they hope to achieve with and for each child or group of children.

One of the findings of the EPPE study in the UK was that the outcomes for children were improved when educators were themselves knowledgeable about curriculum and learning outcomes (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010). In the *Early Years Learning Framework*, the **Learning Outcomes** provide educators with a framework for setting goals for young children's learning. Having a detailed understanding of each of the outcomes and their components supports educators in setting goals that will help each child to make progress toward each of the outcomes in their own unique way.

For some in early childhood this raises a concern that intentional teaching means that there is a risk of adult agendas overshadowing children's interests and agendas. However, this can only be the case if intentional teaching is assumed to be about formal or structured approaches to teaching, or where it is assumed to be an explicit teaching technique. In contrast, when intentional teaching is understood as teaching that is thoughtful, deliberate and purposeful, children's interests and agendas can remain as 'the starting point for an ongoing piece of rich learning [which] may come from one child's interest being picked up by a group of children and/or from an adult sensitively responding to an emerging interest by making suggestions, providing new materials and engaging in thoughtful conversations' (Connor, 2011, p. 1).

Reflection point

- What goals do you currently have for the children in your care? Are these for children as a group or for individuals?
- How do you currently set goals for children? How do you decide what to prioritise for each child?
- How do you know when children have achieved the goals that you have set for them?

4. Select teaching strategies that match the goals they have for children's learning

Although Epstein (2007, p. 4) notes that intentional teaching involves more than just consideration of how educators interact with young, she makes the point that 'intentionality refers especially to how teachers interact with children'. Here Epstein cites Pinta (2003, p. 5) who 'defines intentionality as "directed, designed interactions between children and teachers in which teachers purposefully challenge, scaffold, and extend children's skills"'. Put simply, this means that the teaching technique that an educator selects should be linked to what it is that the educator hopes to achieve with a particular child. Again, this is where the notion of intentional teaching as it is conceptualised in the Early Years Learning Framework differs from the notion of intentional teaching as explicit teaching, since it does not assume that a single teaching technique that is considered to be more intentional or appropriate than another – instead, the technique is appropriate in that it is a match to what the educator is hoping to achieve.

Mac Naughton and Williams (2004) describe a range of teaching techniques that educators use when interacting with young children. Some, such as the technique of positioning equipment and materials, collecting and scheduling, relate to how educators create stimulating and challenging environments that provoke children's curiosity and sustain meaningful learning. Others, such as demonstrating, describing, listening, modeling, co-constructing, problem-solving and philosophising, describe techniques that educators can use either with an individual child or when working with a group of children. However, which technique an educator selects depends very much on what that educator is trying to achieve with and for a child or group of children.

The following case studies provide examples of educators selecting teaching techniques that match the goals that they have set for children. What makes these examples of intentional teaching is that, although the techniques differ, the educator knows what she or he hopes to achieve with or for a child or group of children and is able to describe that.

CASE STUDY 1

Jenny works with four year old children and wants to teach them a new song (this is her goal). To do this, she sings the song repeatedly through the week – sometimes whilst the children are gathered together in a group and sometimes spontaneously as she is working alongside of children. She encourages their participation in the singing and gives feedback on the progress they are making with learning the song (these are the teaching techniques that she uses to achieve her goals).

CASE STUDY 2

Over the past couple of weeks, James has observed three year old Sam trying to participate in socio-dramatic play with his peers. His goal is to support Sam to enter the play more successfully and also to sustain his participation in that play. Knowing that Sam likes trains, James draws a railway track on the ground, lines some crates up on the track, adds a ticket office and some dressing-up clothes that children can wear either as transport workers or as passengers on the train. James engages children's interests (including Sam's) in the train by acting as the train driver. He encourages another child to sell tickets to the passengers and asks another child to check that the passengers all have tickets. As the play proceeds, James asks someone else if they would like to be the train driver. James moves to the side, and offers support by asking where the train is going and reminding the train conductor to check all of the tickets. As the play progresses, with Sam's involvement, James becomes an observer, only stepping in to problem solve any issues with children or to offer a challenge if the play is floundering. These are the teaching techniques that James uses to involve Sam in play and to sustain his involvement in play.

CASE STUDY 3

Over the past few weeks, Tracy has heard a lot of talk about dinosaurs amongst the children. Keen to extend this interest (this is her goal), Tracy sits with a small group of children and asks them everything that they know about dinosaurs. As they are talking, Tracy documents their responses and reads them back to make sure that she has correctly recorded their understandings. Once she has exhausted all that they know, Tracy asks children a range of open-ended questions – for example 'Why do you think that there are no dinosaurs in the world today?' aimed to either extend their knowledge or to open up opportunities for further exploration. These are the teaching techniques that Tracy uses to achieve her goal.

CASE STUDY 4

Eleanor works with children who are 18 months old. She is keen to provide them with opportunities to make their own decisions about what they want to play with (this is her goal). Eleanor sets up the environment so that children can easily access a range of different materials without seeking the help of an adult or educator. This is her teaching technique.

Mac Naughton and Williams (2004) make the point that there are equity implications for the teaching technique that educators choose. For example, they argue that one of the issues that educators should consider when scheduling time is ensuring that boys and girls have equal opportunities to use resources and materials. A similar case can be made for the physical space that boys and girls require to play. Another example relates to the technique of describing. Whilst this might be appropriate in a group where the children all speak the same language as the educator, it might not be as successful if the educator and the child do not speak the same language. Finally, the technique of positioning children and staff in particular places may create challenges for people with disabilities. Educators need to be conscious of the equity issues that arise from the decisions that they make about how to act and interact with young children.



Reflection point

- What teaching techniques do you currently use?
- Which ones are you confident about using with children?
- Which ones would you like to understand better?

5. Create opportunities for sustained shared thinking

The term 'sustained shared thinking' is one that emerged from the EPPE study in the UK and was used to describe 'any episode in which two or more individuals [work together] in an intellectual way to solve a problem, clarify a concept, evaluate activities, etc.' (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010, p. 157). However, in the study, an episode only qualified as an example of sustained shared thinking if all of the individuals contributed to the thinking that was occurring and if it could be shown that children's thinking had been developed and extended as a result (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010).

Sustained shared thinking is about promoting opportunities for children to think deeply about what they do. This, in and of itself, is not a new idea in early childhood education since the notion of sustained shared thinking is similar to Vygotsky's notion of scaffolding, 'where an educator supports children's learning within their 'zone of proximal development' (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010, p. 162). What is new, however, is that the findings of the EPPE study have, for the first time, provided clear evidence that engaging children in sustained shared thinking helps to produce better learning outcomes.

According to Siraj-Blatchford and Manni (2008, p. 15) sustained shared thinking occurs when:

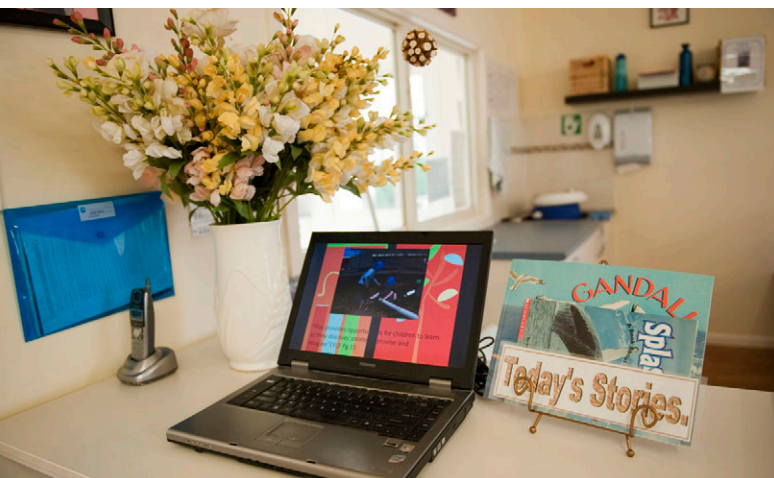
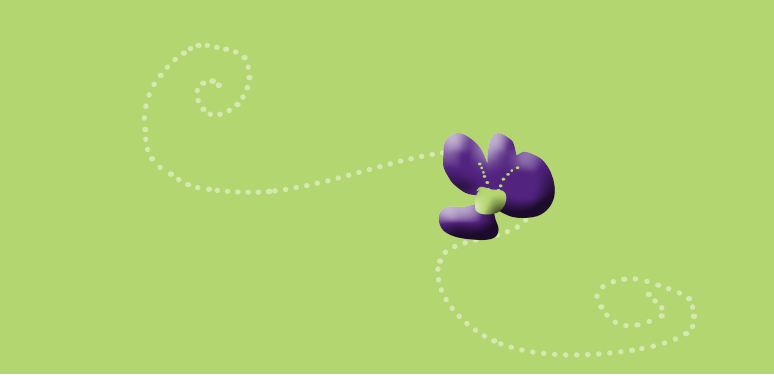
- Educators are knowledgeable about children's interests and understandings and when adults and children work together on an idea or problem.
- Educators challenge children's thinking by engaging in the thinking process with them. This means that educators do not engage with children as the provider of knowledge – rather, they scaffold children with questions that help them to find solutions to their problems or answers to their questions.
- There is a trusting relationship between adults and children.
- Educators are genuinely interested in what children are doing, offer encouragement, clarify ideas and ask questions that support and extend children's thinking and when they help children to make connections between their actions and their learning.

Questions are essential if sustained shared thinking is to occur. However, in a companion study to the EPPE, the Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years (REPEY) study in the UK found

that, of a total 5808 questions analysed, only 5.5% were open-ended and encouraged children to problem solve, hypothesize or speculate on a problem or situation. 94.5% of questions that children were closed questions and simply required them to recall a fact, make a decision between limited options or no response at all (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2008). Likewise, the early findings from the E4 Kids: *Effective Early Educational Experiences* study suggest that whilst educators are providing children with good emotional support and reasonable organisational support for their learning, there is less evidence of instructional support. This means that there is less evidence that educators are using teaching techniques, including questioning, that provide children with opportunities to promote and extend their thinking skills and their understanding of the learning that has occurred. By changing the questions that they ask – from 'what is this?' to 'why do you think' – educators increase the opportunities for sustained shared thinking to occur.

Reflection point

- What does the term 'deep learning' mean to you? What do you currently do to foster 'deep learning' rather than surface or shallow learning?
- How do the questions that you ask enable children to engage in sustained shared thinking?
- How often do you ask children open-ended questions that encourage them to think, problem-solve, hypothesise or speculate on an issue? What you could you do to increase the number of open-ended questions that you ask children?



6. Use their assessments of children's learning to inform future action

(The booklet *Demystifying Assessment in Early Childhood Education* offers a broader discussion on the issue of assessment)

Intentional educators reflect on the impact of their teaching on what children are learning. They use a range of strategies to investigate what children have learnt or what they are learning and then use the information that they have gathered to set new goals for children's learning and to determine how they might respond in the future. Intentional educators document children's learning with them and their families in order to create a record that shows what children have learnt and how they have grown over time. This also highlights the impact that the educator has had on a child's learning and development.

Reflection point

- What do you understand by the term 'assessment'?
- How do you currently assess children's learning? What changes would you like to make to this process?
- How do you use the information that you gather through your assessment of children's learning to inform your ongoing plans for each child's learning and development?



What about play?

One of the concerns that some educators have with the concept of intentional teaching is, with the all of the focus on goals, intentions and interactions, it appears to place the educator at the centre of the curriculum, rather than the child. Perhaps a better way to think about intentional teaching is to think of it not as an attempt to formalise or structure the program, but as a process of becoming more aware of our own role – what we do and why we do what we do – when we are involved with young children. This means that it is not about a fundamental shift away from a play-based curriculum that provides opportunities for children to make choices and control their own learning (in fact, the Early Years Learning Framework advocates strongly for play-based approaches to curriculum and learning) to an activity-driven program where the adult makes all the choices and the child has few options, but rather a requirement that we think much more deeply about what we do and how we interact when we are working alongside children as they play.

It is, however, important to note that it has long been recognised that educators have an important role in play-based programs. Indeed, as Van Hoorn et al (2011) note, a balanced play curriculum is not one where children are freely to simply engage in exploratory play for the entire day. Rather, they state that a balanced play curriculum is one that incorporates teacher-planned experiences (for example, story times), daily life experiences (such as tidying up, setting the table, planting a garden, etc.) and three different types of play – spontaneous (play that is completely initiated by the child), guided (play that may be initiated by the child and supported by the adult) and directed (play that is initiated by the educator but shaped by the child)

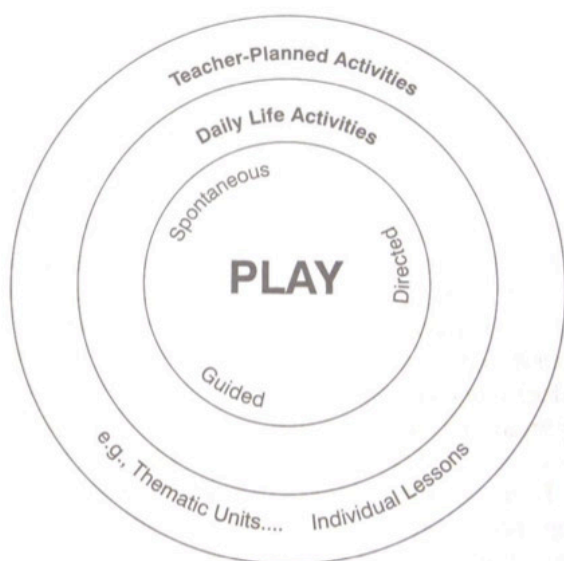


Figure 1: Play at the centre of a balanced curriculum (Van Hoorn et al, 2011, p. 8)

Over the years, a number of people have identified different roles that educators can adopt when working with young children in play-based programs. For example, Jones and Reynolds (2011) identify the following roles that an educator can adopt when working in play-based programs:

- **Stage manager** – educator provide resources, make time, create space, 'set the scene' for children's play
- **Mediator** – educator supports children to resolve conflict and solve problems that might prevent them from playing
- **Player** – educator become a participant in children's play, adopting a character to either extend children's play (for example, a visitor to the home) or a character within children's direction (for example, the big sister)
- **Scribe** – educator helps children to represent their play visually by writing, drawing or photographing what is happening
- **Assessor and communicator** – educator assesses what is happening in children's play and communicates this to children, families and colleagues
- **Planner** – educator plans for play to continue in order for children to develop mature forms of play (Leong & Bodrova, 2012).

Van Hoorn et al (2011) add these roles to the ones described by Jones and Reynolds:

- **Guardian of the gate** – educator supports less confident children to enter play scenarios by observing or offering suggestions about how the child can enter the play
- **Parallel player** – educator plays alongside of children with similar materials, but not necessarily interacting with children
- **Spectator** – educator comments from outside the play and observes what is happening
- **Participant** – educator participates at children's request in play
- **Matchmaker** – educator sets up pairs or groups of children to play together
- **Story player** – educator helps children create story lines that can be acted out or creates them for children
- **Play tutor** – educator plays alongside individual children in order to specifically teach play skills.

Notwithstanding the diversity of roles that an educator can adopt when interacting with children in play, Johnson, Wardle and Christie (2005) note that research into educator's involvement in children's play highlights the fact that:

- When adults are involved in children's play, it lasts longer and is more detailed and elaborate;
- Social interaction between children increases;
- There are higher levels of cognitive activity as teachers scaffold children's learning by asking questions and posing problems; and
- There is increased literacy activity such as writing and drawing when an adult is present in a play scenario and richer oral language can be heard.

However, it is important to note that it is not simply the educator's involvement that is important here – it is the quality of that educator's interactions – how an educator interacts rather than how often (Johnson, Christie & Wardle, 2005). Again, this is where it is important that there is a close match between the goals that the educator has for the child or group of children that he or she is working with and the type of involvement and interaction that the educator selects.

Research findings that highlight the impact that educators can have on the quality of children's play and their learning and development, helps to support the claim that what educators do and how they interact with children can play a part in reducing educational inequality in Australia.

Reflection point

- How do you currently interact in children's play?
- Which roles do you feel most comfortable adopting? Which ones do you feel less comfortable with? Why?
- How has what you have read confirmed or challenged your understanding of a play-based curriculum?

First steps towards intentional teaching



One way that educators can become more intentional in their teaching is to reflect on their current practices. Which of these are done simply because they have always been done? Why should they change? How could they be different? When educators ask and answer questions like these, they have taken the first steps towards intentional teaching.

However, perhaps the most important thing to remember is that intentional teaching isn't something that can be learnt in a single training session! Rather, it requires educators to commit to the idea that good teaching in early childhood education – regardless of the age of the child – requires educators to be thoughtful, purposeful and deliberate in what they do. That means learning to be an intentional educator and being an intentional educator are ongoing practices that change and develop over time.



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Notes



