

# GAME WORKSHOP FOR INFANT EDUCATION

## **TOPIC 1: CONCEPT OF THE GAME**

In this topic, we delve into the fundamental aspects of teaching related to the concept of play and its implications in the field of education. Our exploration is structured across three key points. Firstly, we discuss the fundamentals, methodological approaches, and the direct aspects of games. We then delve into the affective, social, cognitive, sensory, and motor dimensions observed during children's play. Finally, we establish a correlation between pedagogical timelines and game types based on the theory of cognitive development proposed by Piaget. The topic concludes by examining variables of organisation, management, and control in early childhood education classrooms.

### **1. LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE TEACHING GUIDE**

This topic aligns with three learning objectives outlined in the teaching guide. These objectives encompass the theoretical mastery and practical application of game theories and perspectives, the ability to observe and analyse children's play comprehensively, and an understanding of the connections between children's psychomotor development and the role of play in this process.

### **2. CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN'S PLAY AND SIGNIFICANCE IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

Children actively engage in play as an ongoing pursuit driven by intrinsic interest. Play serves as a psychomotor necessity, fostering spontaneous learning and providing a gateway to intellectual, physical, and social/moral development. Thus, Piaget highlighted play as a crucial avenue for cognitive development, emphasising its role in shaping problem-solving skills (Babakr et al., 2019). Vygotsky also proposed the concept of 'socio-dramatic play' illustrating its significance in fostering social and cultural understanding among children (Mahn et al., 2012). Additionally, findings by Russ (1998) emphasised the correlation between play and emotional intelligence, suggesting that play activities contribute significantly to the emotional well-being of children.

According to Spain's educational legislation, Decree 100/2022 underscores the role of the school as a space for well-being and learning, emphasising the critical role of play in secure and supportive environments. Furthermore, Derr and Rigolon (2016) underscored the importance of creating supportive play environments in schools, aligning with the principles outlined in Decree 100/2014.

Play assumes a pivotal role in the multifaceted development of children, influencing psychomotor, cognitive, social, and emotional domains. Russ (1998) delved into the cognitive benefits of play, emphasising its role in enhancing problem-solving skills and creative thinking. Engaging in play enables children to cultivate dynamic coordination, enhance body awareness, and refine sensory perception, thereby establishing the groundwork for their holistic growth. Notably, symbolic play emerges as a critical component, serving to prepare children for societal interactions, stimulate moral development, and promote effective communication and cooperation. Wieder (2017) explores the social and emotional dimensions of symbolic play, shedding light on its contributions to moral reasoning and emotional intelligence. Furthermore, Weisberg et al. (2013) extended the understanding of the link between play and communication,

highlighting how play experiences contribute to the development of effective communication skills in children.

Table. Characteristics and importance of children's play

| <b>Characteristics of children's play</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| It is a <u>cathartic</u> manner to reduce tensions, defend oneself from frustrations, escape from reality, or to reproduce pleasurable situations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| It is a way to rehearse, fix, and retain <u>new habits</u> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| It is a form of learning and harmonious growth: <u>self-education</u> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| It is a <u>voluntary</u> and <u>spontaneous</u> activity that absorbs you totally.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| It is <u>pleasant</u> and satisfying.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| It is rewarding in itself.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| It involves <u>activity</u> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| It is a form of <u>self-expression</u> (confidence, security, and inner balance).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| It involves learning and a form of <u>experimentation with oneself</u> (skills), with <u>others</u> , and with the <u>environment</u> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Importance of playing</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Psychomotor development:</b> improvement of general dynamic and segmental dynamic coordination, human movement behaviour, fibromyalgia syndrome, and body schema issues (sensory perception and use of body parts to represent sensations, ideas or situations).                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Cognitive development:</b> stimulates <u>attention</u> , <u>memory</u> , <u>creativity</u> , and encourages the development of communication and language                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Social development:</b> through symbolic play we prepare children for <u>life in society</u> and <u>stimulate moral</u> development. We encourage <u>communication</u> and <u>cooperation</u> processes with others. With cooperative games we promote communication and feeling of identity and co-operation with peers, and we facilitate the acceptance of differences and the reduction of aggressive behaviour. |
| <b>Emotional development:</b> facilitates conflict resolution and anxiety management. Play favours the development of subjectivity and can produce emotional satisfaction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

### 3. DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF PLAY AND EVOLUTIONARY CLASSIFICATION OF GAMES

Play emerges early in a child's developmental journey and progresses through distinct stages. Piaget recognises the initiation of play in the second stage of the sensorimotor period, typically around the second or third month, as children begin to replicate behaviours for pleasure. Thus, Guerin and McKenzie (2008) build upon Piaget's foundational work, providing insights into the role of the sensorimotor in early cognitive development. Ramani and Brownell (2012) extended the exploration into social play, emphasising the importance of interaction and cooperation as play evolves during early childhood. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasises the social nature of play, suggesting that it becomes a tool for communication and understanding within a cultural context as children progress through developmental stages.

Games undergo an evolutionary process intertwined with cognitive development. The classification of games aligns with distinct developmental stages (Figure 1). Functional play (0-6 months), exploratory play (6-12 months), self-assertion play (1-2 years), symbolic play (2-4 years), and prosocial play (4-6 years) represent sequential phases with each offering unique contributions to a child's growth. According to the research, Schröder et al. (2020) delved into the significance of functional play during early infancy, elucidating its role in sensory-motor integration. As already mentioned, Wieder (2017) explore the social and emotional dimensions of symbolic play, and discussed its contributions to moral reasoning and emotional intelligence.

Furthermore, Schipper (2017) extended the understanding of self-assertion play (self-confirming games) and reported on its role in autonomy development and the expression of individuality in toddlers.



Figure 1. Types of games from birth to 6 years

#### 4. ORGANISATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Firstly, efficiently organising physical education activities requires thoughtful attention to group characteristics, spatial and material resources, and selected methodologies. The key components of successful organisation include meticulous planning, cultivating a positive atmosphere, and implementing an individualised teaching approach (Figure 2).

Ensuring a safe environment is paramount in physical education or when teaching games. Teachers play a pivotal role in risk prevention, adapting activities to accommodate individual differences, and imparting information on the proper use of materials and game rules. Rigorous monitoring, incorporation of rest intervals, and careful control of intensity levels collectively contribute to enhancing both safety and the overall effectiveness of physical education.

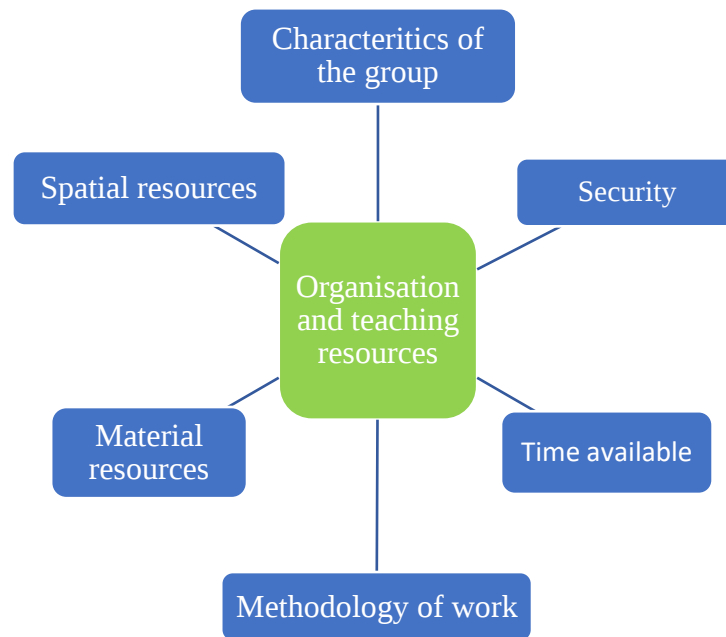


Figure 2. Organisation and teaching resources for planning sessions

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Understanding the role of play in physical education is paramount. From its inception in the early stages of life to its varied forms in later childhood, play shapes and influences the development of children. Educators must understand the theoretical underpinnings of play and implement effective methodologies that consider individual differences, safety, and the developmental stages of the pupils. This chapter equips educators with the knowledge and tools to foster a positive and enriching physical education experience for children, setting the stage for a lifelong relationship with physical activity and well-being.

## 6. PROPOSED TASKS FOR PUPILS

Task 1. After watching the documentary ‘Imagine Elephants’ (Google it), discuss and answer the following questions as a group:

- Which definition of play do you most identify with and why?
- How do you think our experiences with games influence the way we understand and conceive the world?
- How do schools shape the way children play and what impact does this have on their development?
- What can we as (future) educators do to change the dynamics in most schools?

Task 2. Life story: ‘Playing during your childhood’. Tell your story answering these questions:

- What games did you play when you were little?
- Which games did you like the most and why?
- Did you play alone or in a small or large group?
- Did you play in the street, at school, at home...?
- Did it change the way you play when you entered school?

- When did you start losing interest in playing?

## 7. REFERENCES

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## **TOPIC 2. TYPES OF MOTOR GAMES**

The use of motor games plays an important role in the personal development of pupils as it satisfies their needs for action and expression, while contributing to their acquisition of physical, intellectual, and social skills, which allow them to recognise social values and norms.

*‘Playing is not studying or working, but by playing the child learns, above all, to understand the world around them’.*

A motor game is defined as a playful activity with motor significance, that is, a sufficient degree of motricity and the use of movement systems that involve intention, decision, and adjustment to fluctuating situations in the environment and with others (Navarro, 2002). Therefore, we must differentiate between a motor action (gesture, movement, and execution) and motor behaviour (understood as being endowed with intentionality and meaning).

There are different classifications within the field of motor games (Table 1). As can be seen, these include various types of games depending on whether they have an educational, recreational, or sporting objectives, or aim at the generation of group dynamics, etc.

Table 1. Motor game classification according to different authors.

| <b>Author</b>              | <b>Characteristics</b>                                                               | <b>Types of motor games</b>                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Galley (1999)              | Without motor interaction                                                            | Individual                                                                                                                                    |
|                            | With motor interaction                                                               | Cooperation<br>Opposition<br>Cooperation and opposition                                                                                       |
| Piaget                     | According to developmental phase                                                     | Sensorimotor<br>Symbolic<br>With rules                                                                                                        |
| Navarro (2002)             | For different group dynamics – aims                                                  | Presentation<br>Simulation<br>Trust<br>Cooperation<br>Conflict resolution                                                                     |
|                            | Part of the function of the participation of and communication between participant/s | Individual (self-improvement)<br>Opposition<br>Cooperative<br>Cooperation/opposition                                                          |
|                            | Part of the complexity of the task                                                   | Generic motor skills<br>Specific motor skills<br>Adapted                                                                                      |
| Renson and Smulders (1981) | Traditional games                                                                    | With...<br>Balls<br>Animals<br>Shooting and aiming<br>Fighting<br>Locomotion<br>Throwing<br>Training for land work (e.g., cutting down trees) |

In physical education (PE) the use of motor games for the experimentation and exploration of everything that surrounds children is well recognised. In preschool education, we can use motor games as teaching content for the development of **perceptual and basic motor skills**. In the

following sections, we discuss their definitions and main characteristics/elements, as well as how to develop them in preschool.

## 1. PERCEPTUAL MOTOR SKILLS

Perceptual motor skills refer to the ability to coordinate sensory systems with global or partial body movements (Figure 1). Therefore, this term tells us about the relationship between movement and the perception of information. Perception refers to the conscious organisation of data information, received through the senses, concerning one's body and the environment. According to Díaz-Barahona and Navarro (2012), perception is the awareness of said sensations. Perception may be learned and, to do so, children must move and practice basic motor skills.

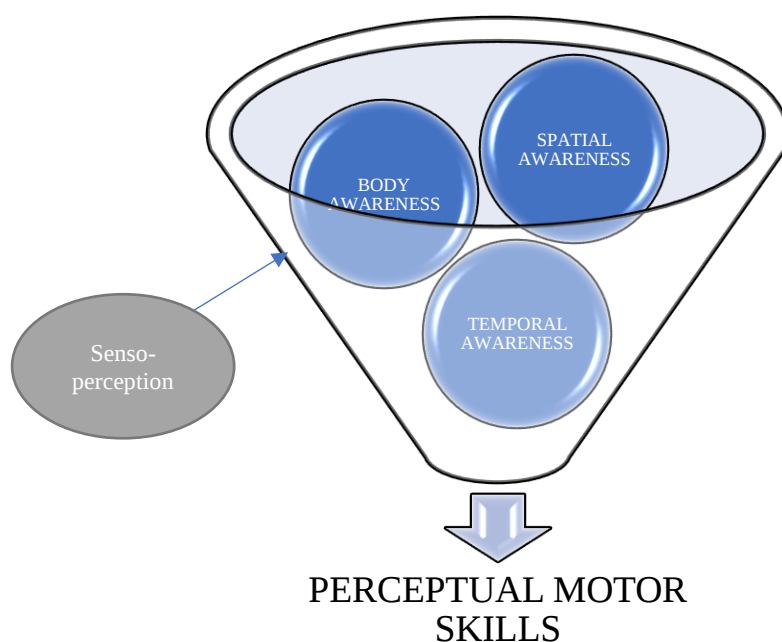


Figure 1. Perceptual motor skills (modified from Torres, 2015)

A sensation refers to basic immediate experiences, generated by simple isolated stimuli. Sensory information can be obtained through different channels; therefore, we can experience interoceptive, proprioceptive, and exteroceptive types. Visual and auditory information is especially important in PE. Vision reveals a ball, its shape, size, colour, thickness, location in space, etc. The ear can detect the sounds that occur around us, as well as detecting rhythms.

When pupils start preschool, their sensory organs are already capable of receiving information through vision, taste, smell, hearing, and touch. Therefore, to establish this knowledge, pupils must be guided through an analysis of their environment, ordering the perceptions they receive from it. This is known as *sensoperception*, which is understood as the stimulation of the body's receptors to become aware and educate the senses (Figure 2).

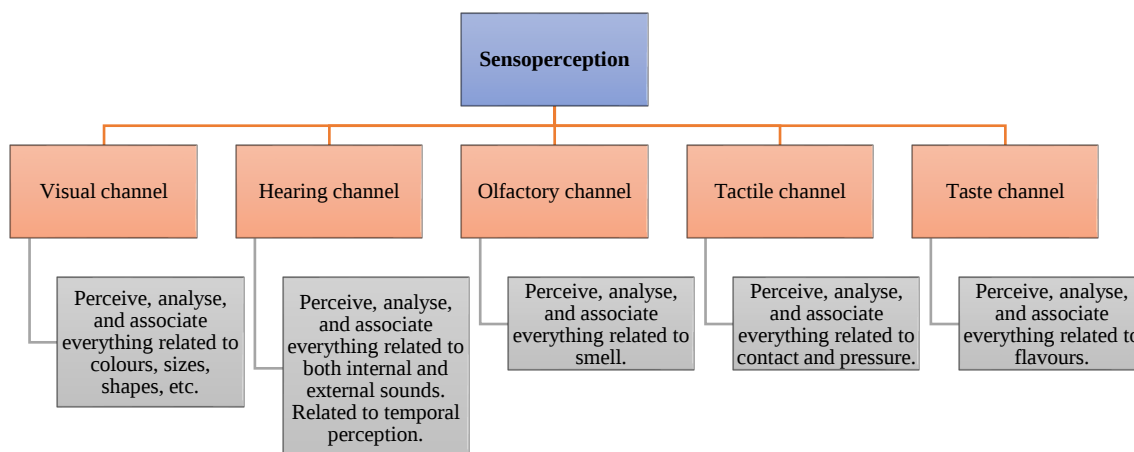


Figure 2. Sensory perception works in various ways (Torres, 2015)

To achieve this, for example, tactile explorations can be carried out (e.g., the feeling of rough, smooth or soft surfaces) as well as the recognition of shapes or surfaces with eyes closed, in addition to tastes and olfactory characteristics, sound stimuli, etc. To develop perception in children, we can use, for example: i) visual stimulation with mirrors, lights, and coloured objects; ii) tactile stimulation with different temperatures, pressures, etc.; iii) auditory stimulation with different songs or rhythms; and iv) olfactory and gustatory stimulation with flowers, fruits (see the example below), perfumes, and so on.

*Example of sensory perception work (Torres, 2015, p. 19):*

*The pupils must pass through several hoops, each of which has a fruit figure (orange, banana, pineapple, etc.), which they must identify as they go. Subsequently, they must walk over some psychomotor tiles, as if they are crossing a river, and take them to a large forest; there they must dodge several trees (represented with sticks) in a zigzag. At the end, they reach a cave, where there is a closed box that they must put their hand inside and, with their eyes closed, taste what they have picked up (a piece of orange, lemon, or banana) and identify what food it is.*

### **1.1. BODY AWARENESS: PERCEPTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE BODY SCHEMA**

The body schema refers to awareness of your body in space and the relationships between the parts that compose it. Since this concept is dynamic and varies throughout your life, the development of the body schema occurs when pupils can acquire knowledge about themselves, identify and understand this knowledge in relation to themselves and others, as well as using it efficiently and effectively for moving. Le Boulch (2001) defined the body schema as the ‘immediate knowledge we have of our body in relation to its different parts and their relationships with the surrounding space of objects and people’. For Vayer (1985), this knowledge follows the laws of cephalo-caudal development (where development occurs from top to bottom) and the proximal-distal type (where the parts that are closest to the trunk are the first known and comprehended).

During preschool and primary education, it is necessary to create tasks for children through which they can become better aware of their body, because a poor development of the body schema can

have various consequences, such as spatio-temporal perception deficits which can lead to clumsiness and a lack of coordination, as well as insecurity, and low self-esteem.

Experimentation and exploration, through sensory-perceptive and motor capabilities, strengthen the development of the body schema. Essentially, the child first discovers their body and its possibilities through their instinctive and global bodily activities, and then through differentiated and intentional activities. When talking about the body schema, it is necessary to also mention *somatognosia* and *stereognosis*. The first term refers to information from the body itself, while the second involves the analysis of information from the outside (i.e., spatiality and temporality) and the two processes must work together.

Le Boulch distinguishes three stages in the development of the body schema (Figure 3):

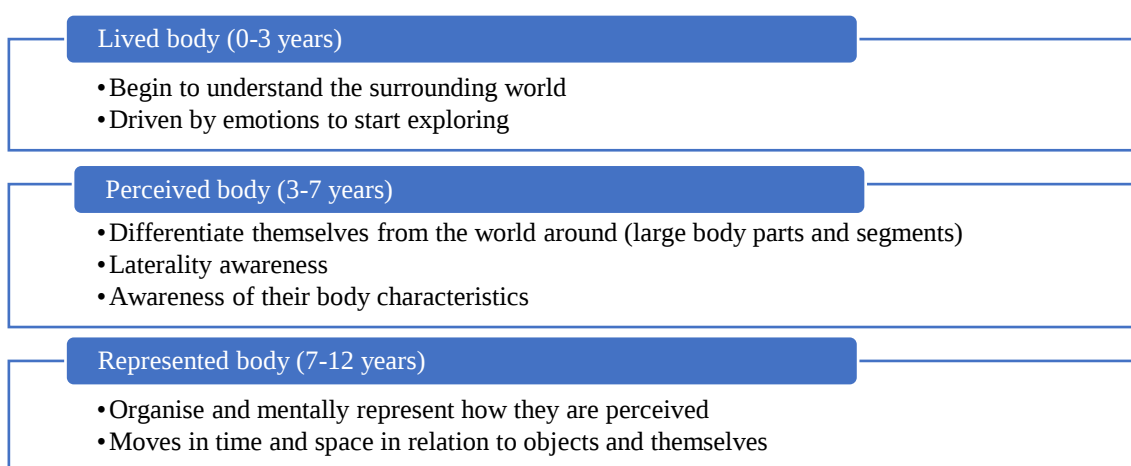


Figure 3. Stages of the development of the body schema

The development of the body schema is based on the perception and control of one's own body, in addition to a well-defined laterality, as well as control and independence of the individual segments. Therefore, in practice, activities involving segmental independence and imitation of a partner should be carried out where the parts of the body are identified (e.g., through games such as *Mirrors* or *Let's be puppets*). A practical session of activities is shown below in Table 2.

Table 2. Examples of activities to be carried out in a practical session.

| <i>PRACTICAL SESSION</i>  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>The mirror</i>         | <i>There are two groups of children, where those in one group are 'the mirrors' and must imitate the movement of their partners.</i>                                                                                                                              |
| <i>Blind</i>              | <i>In pairs, one child adopts a certain position and their partner, with their eyes closed or wearing a mask, will touch them and try to recognise the partner's posture. After that, and without the mask, they will try to reproduce the partner's posture.</i> |
| <i>Twister with rings</i> | <i>The teacher will indicate a colour and body part that must be placed in each coloured ring.</i>                                                                                                                                                                |
| <i>Musical statues</i>    | <i>Pupils move through the space, dancing to the rhythm of the music, and when it stops, they must stay balanced in the position that they are in.</i>                                                                                                            |

## 1.2. SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL AWARENESS

### 1.2.1. Spatial awareness

Spatial perception can be understood as an awareness of one's body and the space in which one moves. It is determined by the stimuli that are produced. Piaget (1979) in his study of the evolution of spatial awareness in children, classified different stages from birth to the period of specific operations, including perceptual (visual), topographic, and Euclidean space. According to this author, teachers should prepare tasks for children through which they can explore the space in which they live and move, starting from the self-space and the external (near and far space), and distinguish the basic spatial concepts.

During the first year of life, boys and girls perceive only nearby space; it will not be until approximately six to seven years old that topological space will appear, which is where the concepts of proximity, distance, separation, ordering, continuity, and displacement are established. For this reason, it is said that pupils evolve from an 'egocentric' perspective, where the body's own space is not distinguished from other objects. Children, through manipulations, constructions, and displacements encounter the objects and the world around them. We can also classify space in relation to the bodily self in the child's own space (the space occupied by the body), nearby space (the area where the child moves, near to their initial location), and distant space (the environment or landscape in which the child moves, also called total or general space). Later, at approximately 8 to 10 years of age, the projective space is established, which is when the perspective and projection of different objects appears, that is, pupils can place objects relative to their depth and size. Eventually, metric space appears, where pupils can now make spatial representations since they are able to coordinate objects with others in relation to a system of reference or coordinates, recognising concepts such as length, volume and surface, as well as geometric shapes.

Regarding the **evolution of spatiality in preschool**, pupils can organise objects with respect to others by the age of three, and understand the concepts of inside-outside, above-below, and near-far. From the age of four they can identify angles and compare lengths. At this point, the spatial ideas to be taught are *location* and *orientation*. *Location* refers to one's location in a space (*example*: I am in the centre of the gym) while *orientation* is the ability to maintain the location of one's body based on the position of other objects relative to one's own position (*example*: I move forward and I throw my bag to the right, taking my body as a reference). Spatial orientation is related to perceptual and sensory motor space.

In terms of practical activities, the development of spatial structuring by pupils should be encouraged through games involving distances (far/close, together/separate), directions (front/behind, right/left, up/down), situations (inside/outside, above/below, inside/outside), trajectories (straight, curves), groupings and dispersions, surfaces (depending on free and full space), sizes (large/small, tall/low, narrow/wide) and order and succession, which refers to the organisation and ordering of objects or people. Some examples are 'land and sea' (*mar y tierra* in Spanish), in addition to the children creating groups or trajectories (e.g., 'thread cutter' or *cortahilos* in Spanish), positioning themselves in space according to the teacher's instructions (e.g., behind their sword) or touching various parts with the hand (e.g., right knee, head, etc.), either at the teacher's direction or through playful forms (e.g., plague or *la peste* in Spanish). Likewise, movements can be adapted to certain commands (e.g., following the lines, changing direction) from teachers or through chase games (e.g., *comecocos*). This can include placing themselves at a certain distance from other people and objects. The manipulation of objects can be practiced by throwing items like rings at varying heights, distances, etc. Other possibilities include bouncing balls in different directions with respect to lines painted on the ground (straight

forward, backwards, to one side and the other, etc.) or throwing a ball, trying to run as close as possible until it stops or running in front of it without allowing the ball to catch up, etc.

### **1.2.2. Temporal awareness**

Temporal awareness is understood as the awareness of time, based on the events (with a beginning and end) or changes that occur. Time cannot be perceived through the senses and only events can be perceived (e.g., motor action, speed, and result). Temporal and spatial awareness constitutes one of the basic aspects of psychomotor development, since carrying out a physical activity involves a specific space and time. It should be noted that it is intricately related to eye-hand and eye-foot coordination.

According to Piaget, the evolution of the perception of time is more complex than that of space, because this content is difficult to perceive, as is the perception of order and succession (today, yesterday, tomorrow), in the first years of a child's life (the *sensorimotor stage*). It is more difficult than understanding the concept of speed (running faster or slower than your partner). With respect to the study of the evolution of time in children, Piaget establishes the same guidelines as for the progression of space, evolving from a perceptual plane to a representative one.

In terms of the evolution of temporality in preschool, during the first years of life, children have an idea of time based on their physiological necessities such as hunger or sleep, but they do not understand temporal concepts. At four years of age, they understand basic aspects about speed (e.g., slow and fast) and at the end of preschool they can recognise the duration of an action. The perception of an action's duration (understood as the temporal interval that separates two reference points), through different speeds and the regulation of tempo, as well as the order (understood as the successive distribution of the events and situations that occur), should be incorporated into learning activities.

Therefore, to work on temporal awareness, activities can be carried out at different speeds (e.g., *the four corners*). It should be noted that rhythm is the perception of order and duration in relation to space and time. Rhythms develop according to the pulse, accent, and tempo. For example, this can involve clapping along to rhythms set by the teachers and pupils. In a group, pupils can also move around, trying to bounce at the same pace, or make a circle, holding each other with their hands, and attempting to jump at the same time. They can also be asked to move around the space and, at the teacher's signal, carry out an activity (e.g., clapping or jumping). To practice the handling of objects, pupils can throw items such as balloons and count how long it takes for them to fall to the ground or perform a certain number of gestures before they hit the floor.

## 2. MOTOR SKILLS

### 2.1. ABILITIES, SKILLS AND MOTOR TASKS: CONCEPTUAL DELIMITATION

Before developing the topic of motor skills, we must clarify the terms and concepts that we are going to employ, especially because the concepts of ability and skill are usually used interchangeably and this causes confusion.

We usually define an *ability* such as a capacity that is acquired through learning to produce pre-established results, with maximum success and minimal time and energy consumption. Abilities are considered innate and are the basis of future learning. On the other, a *skill* is the most evolved, effective and efficient level of a motor skill that has been consolidated from learning and practice, following the motor skill evolution presented in Figure 4 and Table 3. Therefore, motor skills are conditioned by **heredity** and **experience**.

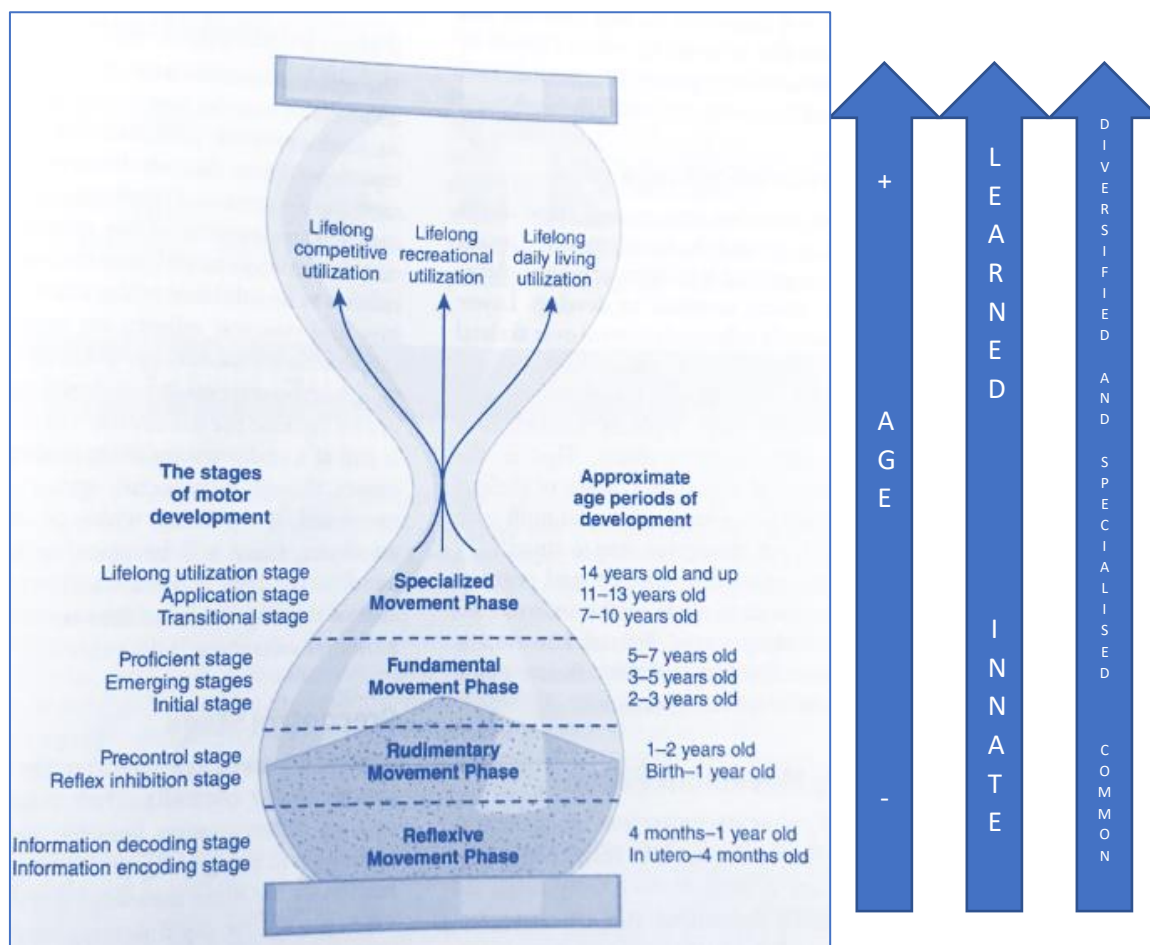


Figure 4. Evolution of motor skills with age

Table 3. Classification of motor skills according to the pupils' ages

| Skill type              | Characteristics                                  | Development |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Perceptual motor skills | Spatial, temporal and spatio-temporal perception | 3-7 years   |
| Basic motor skills      | Movements, jumps, turns, throws and catches      | 7-11 years  |
| Generic skills          | Dribbling, hitting, feinting, falling, etc.      | 8-12 years  |
| Specific skills         | Determined by the sports specialty               | 13-18 years |

|                    |                                                                                                                                                          |           |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Specialised skills | Result from the maturation of fundamental patterns that have been refined and combined to form sports skills and other complex and specific motor skills | +18 years |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|

Starting from the earliest stages of human movement, the first movements of the foetus are **reflexes** which are involuntary and allow infants to gain information about the immediate environment. These are the consequences of children's reactions to touch, light, sounds, or changes in pressure. Further information about reflexes and tools can be found at the [following link](#).

The first forms of voluntary movement are **rudimentary** (from birth to two years). They involve stability movements such as gaining control of the head, neck, and trunk muscles, as well as manipulative ones like reaching, grasping, and releasing; finally, rudimentary locomotor movements include crawling or walking (Figure 5).

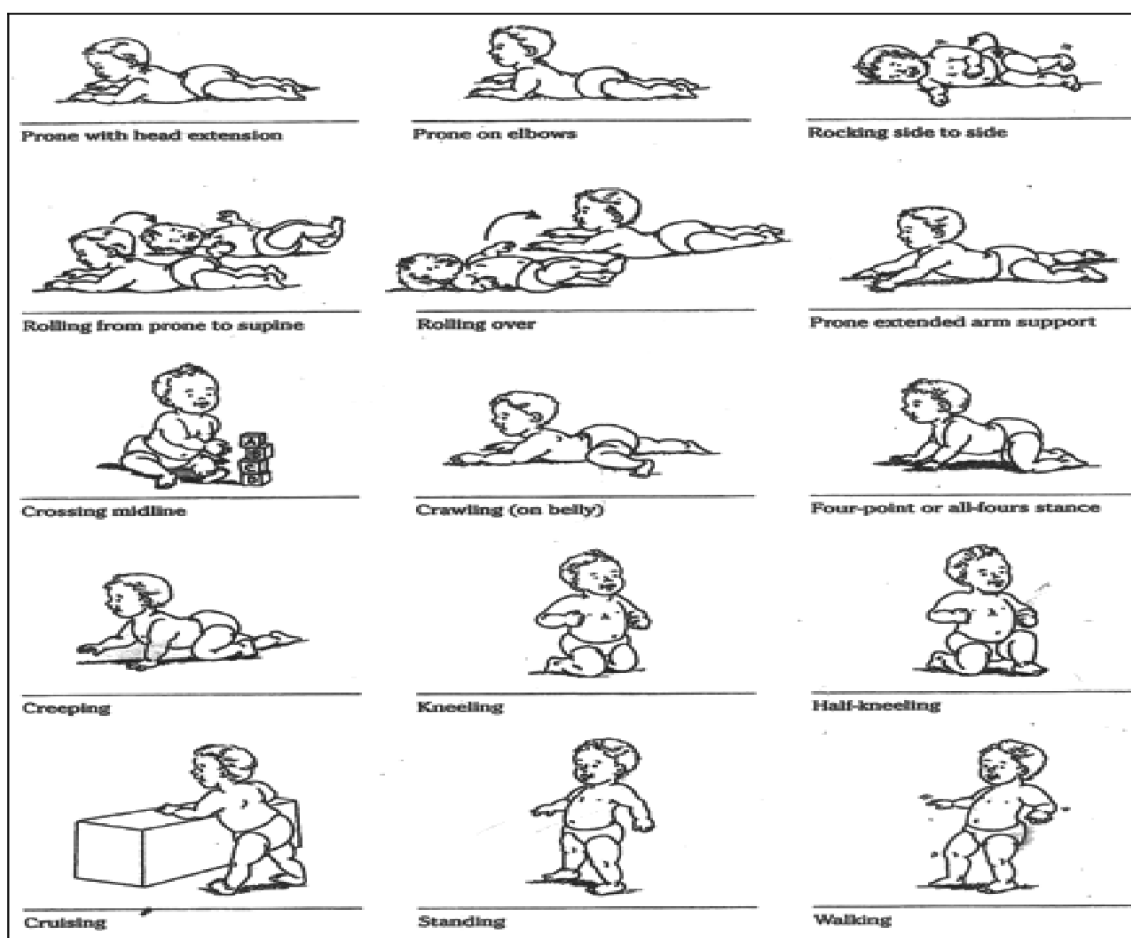


Figure 3.3: Rudimentary movement phases

Figure 5. Rudimentary movement phases (retrieved from [Krog et al., 2011](#))

The following phase occurs in the acquisition of **fundamental movement** patterns. Fundamental motor skills refer to the competence – degree of achievement – in carrying out motor responses or movements that play a primary and irreplaceable role. Therefore, they are a set of fundamental movements and motor actions that arise in the human evolution of motor patterns. In this phase, children discover how to perform a variety of stabilising, locomotor, and manipulative movements (see Table 4 for a further description of the motor skills domains), first in isolation and then in combination with others. The conditions of the environment and the opportunities for

practice play important roles in the degree to which fundamental movement skills develop from the initial to the proficient stage. The activities for developing motor skills at this stage are games and sports played par excellence. According to Gallahue and Ozmun (2006), cited in Goodway et al., pupils move from developing rudimentary skills to more complex forms thanks to practice environments and reinforcements, as well as feedback and appropriate instruction.

The final phase is characterised by the acquisition of the **specialised movement** skills, which are developments of the fundamental movement phase (Figure 5).

Table 4. Fundamental motor skills and description according to ability domains.

| <b>Ability</b>             | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Displacement (locomotion)  | Progression from one point in space to another, using total or partial body movements. In preschool, through displacement movements pupils can explore and learn about the environment that surrounds them.                                                                                                                |
| <i>Walking</i>             | Displacement produced by the successive and alternative footsteps on the ground (without an aerial phase).                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <i>Running</i>             | Displacement produced by an alternative succession of footsteps on the ground in which there is an aerial phase between the steps.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>Four-legged posture</i> | Displacements produced by more than two support points.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <i>Crawling</i>            | Displacement in which there is contact of the pupil's trunk with the surface/ground where she/he is moving in the horizontal plane.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <i>Climbing</i>            | Movements produced by successive supports of the feet and hands and through which the subject stops being in contact with the ground (e.g., climbing a trellis).                                                                                                                                                           |
| <i>Transportation</i>      | Displacement produced by others. Generally, the transported individual is in a passive position (e.g., transport in 'the queen's chair').                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <i>Sliding</i>             | Movements made by means of an object. They can be performed horizontally (e.g., skating) or while inclined (e.g., sliding down a gymnastic bench).                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>Suspensions</i>         | Displacements that are generally made with the hands or feet and hands. Suspension means that the subject is no longer in contact with the ground.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>Propulsions</i>         | Movements in water.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Jumping                    | The body takes off from the ground and remains momentarily suspended in the air because of the impulse made by one or both legs, which is either static or dynamic. It has different phases: preparation, impulse, flight and fall.                                                                                        |
| Twisting (body control)    | Movements that involve rotation through the body's imaginary axes, that is, the vertical, anteroposterior and transversal ones. The vertical (or longitudinal) axis crosses the body in an up-down direction, the horizontal (or transverse) from left to right, and the anteroposterior (or sagittal) from front to back. |
| Throwing (object control)  | Movement of throwing an object from the subject's hand/s with the intention that it hits something or reaches a recipient.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Catching (object control)  | Absorption-damping movement or trapping of an object that is in static space or moving through space.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

For the development of walking and running, which involves a relationship with the perceptual motor skills, activities will be carried out that focus on distances and speeds, as well as orientation activities, running while imitating movements, etc. In addition, according to non-linear pedagogy, the space can be modified so that movements are made over benches, different surfaces, hoops, or obstacles, changing directions and distances, as well as modifying the number of supports (three or four), mimicking animals, or using small transports, individually or cooperatively, etc.

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## **PRACTICAL LESSON FOR DEVELOPING PERCEPTUAL AND FUNDAMENTAL MOTOR SKILLS WITH A CIRCUS THEME:**

*Introducing the theme (to be read aloud): after a strong storm, the entire circus is blown away. We have been left without clowns, without trapeze artists, without joy, without laughter, and without fun. But the show must go on because people are arriving and we must open the circus. Everybody will have to learn different trades. Please, explore the different environments and see which job you are best at doing.*

1. Mime environment: each mime must try different actions: climbing a rope, touching an invisible wall, rowing a boat, swimming, skiing, driving, riding a horse, taming an animal, playing football, playing basketball, playing tennis, being a clown, being a tightrope walker....
2. Stunt environment: mats to perform turns.
3. Throwing environment: we will draw different targets where the pupils must be able to insert a small ball through the holes.
4. Tightrope walker environment: balance on floor lines, gymnastic benches, inverted benches, KTK boards, treadmills, stilts.
5. Juggling environment: juggling with ping-pong balls can be done individually or in pairs or trios.
6. Escape from the lion: a group of little animals (pupils) run away from the lion (the one who tags) tries to catch them. To save themselves, the little animals must enter the shelters (hoops), and the only condition is that they cannot enter a shelter already occupied by others.
7. Lost animal search environment: balls with the image of animals, lions, elephants, monkeys, etc. that will be scattered throughout the space and that pupils must find and place inside boxes.
8. Balloon environment: artists must prepare a show with balloons. They must inflate them and see how long they take to fall to the ground, then see if they can carry them held between each other, and finally, pop them.
9. The construction of a grandstand: build a grandstand, the circus performers must pick up the bricks (foam blocks) and carry them to a seating area to form a wall (without it falling).
10. Masters of the hoop: the circus performers must perform a routine with hoops by handling them, rolling them through space, directing them toward an object, and swinging them around the waist, etc.

### **TOPIC 3: ACTIVITIES AND RHYTHMIC EXPRESSIVE GAMES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

This topic explores the importance of body expression with rhythmic activities, dances, and dramatic play in early childhood education. Children's potential to foster creativity, movement, and holistic development is highlighted. The chapter begins by defining key concepts such as inner and external rhythms, tempo, and pacing, and discusses how these concepts can be used to create effective learning experiences for young children. The chapter then examines the holistic benefits of rhythmic activities, dances, and dramatizations – and highlights their role in developing children's creative expression, motor skills, and social-emotional skills. The chapter also provides specific teaching tips for teachers on how to cultivate creative expression in dance activities. Finally, the chapter concludes by discussing factors that can enhance the overall impact of expressive tasks and games for pre-teachers.

#### **1. TEACHING GUIDE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

There are three learning outcomes in the teaching guide related to this topic:

- Recognise the value of symbolic play in child development, capacity to design spaces and times for play in an educational project.
- Ability to design and structure methodological resources, spaces, and materials around specific games: play in open and closed spaces or individual and collective games.
- Ability to design, apply, and evaluate in various contexts, play-motor proposals oriented towards self-knowledge, discovery, and relationship with the environment, or to facilitate relationships with objects and peers.

#### **2. BODY EXPRESSION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Body expression (BE) plays a pivotal role in human communication, transcending the limitations of verbal language to convey a myriad of moods, emotions, ideas, thoughts, and feelings. It serves as a fundamental component of an individual's identity, shaping their originality and personal expression (Allwood, 2002).

In the early stages of childhood, BE encompasses nearly the entirety of a child's communication before they acquire the ability to express themselves and interact through verbal language (Guilcapi, 2016). At this formative stage, BE is primarily motor-based, gradually incorporating stimuli from both external and internal environments. This learning process unfolds through symbolic actions, enabling children to represent and communicate their experiences and perceptions (Guilcapi, 2016).

The integration of BE into early childhood education is crucial for several compelling reasons (Guilcapi, 2016). Firstly, early childhood represents a vital period for nurturing expressive performances as children exhibit a heightened receptivity to non-verbal communication. Secondly, BE promotes the overall development of children's capabilities and mastery of their expressive resources through a range of materials, experiences, and opportunities for action. Thirdly, BE encourages the exploration of gender-neutral expressions, fostering a more inclusive and diverse learning environment that challenges societal stereotypes. Fourthly, BE facilitates children's ability to express themselves, understand their emotions, and comprehend the expressions of others. Additionally, it enables adults to better understand children's wants and needs, fostering stronger connections and more effective communication (Guilcapi, 2016).

### 3. THE INCORPORATION OF BODY EXPRESSION INTO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATIONAL AIMS TO ACHIEVE SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENTAL OBJECTIVES.

The integration of body expression into early childhood education serves as a catalyst for achieving a range of developmental objectives, laying the foundation for holistic growth and personal development. These objectives include:

- Body schema awareness: body expression fosters a deep understanding of one's own body, its capabilities, and its relationship to space and others. Through physical exploration and movement, children develop a sense of body ownership, spatial awareness, and motor coordination (Ene et al., 2016).
- Personal possibilities recognition: body expression encourages the exploration and expression of individual expressive potential. As children engage in creative movement and imitation, they discover their unique physical and expressive capabilities, building self-confidence and fostering a sense of personal identity (Thom 2010).
- Rhythm development: body expression enhances rhythmic perception and responsiveness. Children engage with a variety of rhythmic patterns, expanding their auditory and motor skills, and developing the ability to coordinate their movements with internal and external rhythms (Yu et al., 2022).
- Spatio-temporal perception: body expression promotes spatial and temporal awareness. As children move through space, they develop a sense of direction, balance, and coordination. They also learn to sequence movements, anticipate events, and maintain a sense of tempo (Ene et al., 2016).

By incorporating body expression into early childhood education, educators can provide children with a comprehensive and engaging learning environment that fosters their expressive capabilities, builds a strong sense of self, and prepares them for success in a diverse and inclusive world. Decree 100/2022 states that body expression should be developed in different areas but specially in the performance and communication area.

Table 1. Basic knowledge in curriculum for elemental stage:

|             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| First cycle | <p>2. Sound and expressive possibilities of the voice, the body, objects, and instruments.</p> <p>3. Image and sound in the physical environment.</p> <p>4. Listening as a discovery and enjoyment of the environment.</p> <p>5. Songs and other musical manifestations. Lullabies and lap games. Accompanying sensations, recognition, evocation, and reproduction.</p> <p>6. Exploration and expression through gesture and free movement. Movement through space.</p> <p>9. Desire to communicate and interest in participating in different artistic proposals.</p> |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Second cycle | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Creative and communicative possibilities of digital applications and tools.</li> <li>3. Image and sound in the physical and virtual environment.</li> <li>4. Approach to the language of sound and the expressive and creative possibilities of the voice, body, and everyday objects in the environment and instruments.</li> <li>5. Visual and auditory identification and discrimination.</li> <li>6. Songs and other musical and artistic manifestations. Feelings, emotions, and actions that they suggest.</li> <li>7. Voice care. Relaxation and vocal intensity.</li> <li>8. Gesture, movement, mime, dance and theatre. Interest and participation.</li> <li>10. Games of corporal and dramatic expression.</li> </ol> |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

#### 4. RHYTHMIC ACTIVITIES AND DANCES: FOSTERING CREATIVITY AND MOVEMENT

Rhythmic activities and dances hold immense significance in early childhood education, providing a nurturing environment for children to explore their innate rhythms, engage in creative expression, and enhance their motor and social-emotional skills (Matthews et al., 2016). Understanding the concepts of inner and external rhythms, tempo, and pacing is essential for educators to effectively foster these developmental aspects.

The inner rhythm encompasses the natural movement patterns and tempos that children possess from birth (Benari, 2014). It is the foundation upon which their movement abilities and rhythmic expression are built. Recognising and respecting each child's unique inner rhythm is crucial for effective teaching. By observing each child's individual tempo and responsiveness to rhythmic cues, educators can tailor activities to match their developmental level, promoting engagement and success.

External rhythm refers to the relationship between sound values, such as beats and accents, which provides a framework for organising movements in time and space. Through rhythmic activities, children develop a sense of musicality, learn to anticipate and respond to rhythmic patterns, and coordinate their movements with the beat. This synchronisation between internal and external rhythms fosters a sense of connection, both with oneself and with others (Pollatou et al., 2003).

Finally, the tempo, or speed, of rhythmic activities can significantly influence the mood and energy of a group of children (Benet and Remier, 2006). While upbeat tempos can create excitement and engagement, they can also lead to restlessness and agitation, especially for younger children. To maintain a balanced and supportive atmosphere, educators should incorporate activities with a range of tempos, starting with calm and gentle rhythms to ease children into the experience. This gradual pacing ensures that all children can participate comfortably and successfully, fostering a sense of inclusion and belonging (Matthews et al., 2016).

#### Rhythmic activities and dances: a holistic approach to development

The integration of rhythmic activities and dances into early childhood education offers a holistic approach to child development. By providing opportunities for exploration, expression, and

coordination, these activities nurture children's creative expression, motor and social-emotional skills (Mathews et al., 2016). Thus, children are encouraged to invent their own movement sequences, translating their thoughts, emotions, and experiences into physical form. This creative process fosters imagination, self-expression, and confidence. Also, rhythmic activities engage various muscle groups, promoting coordination, balance, and spatial awareness. Children learn to control their movements, respond to rhythmic cues, and move with fluidity and grace. Finally, dance encourages teamwork, cooperation, and respect for others, promoting positive social interactions and emotional regulation. Children learn to express their emotions appropriately, negotiate roles, and work together towards a common goal.

## **5. TEACHING ASPECTS OF DANCES: CULTIVATING CREATIVE EXPRESSION**

Teachers should consider different aspect when teaching. Effective dance instruction should emphasise creativity and self-expression rather than rote repetitions or imitations. Teachers must empower children to explore their ideas, experiment with movement patterns, and create unique dance sequences. It is also important to encourage children to translate their inner feelings and perceptions into movement, fostering emotional expression and self-awareness. Finally, they should try to cultivate creativity by allowing children to improvise, invent, and recreate their own choreographies (Weber and Reed, 2022).

## **6. CONSIDERING FACTORS FOR EFFECTIVE DANCE EXPERIENCES**

To enhance the overall impact of dance activities, teachers should consider incorporating the following factors (Graham, 2022):

- Music: use music that evokes various moods and emotions to inspire children's movements.
- Environmental awareness: encourage spatial awareness by incorporating movement patterns that involve navigating different areas of the classroom or outdoor spaces.
- Self-awareness: promote body awareness by focusing on the body's internal sensations and the relationship between movement and breathing.
- Relevance to children's lives: draw connections to children's everyday experiences and interests to make the activities more meaningful and relatable.
- Communication and language: emphasise the expressive power of the body, gestures, and facial expressions, fostering communication and language development.
- Integration with art: encourage storytelling through dance, incorporating elements of performance and visual arts to enhance creativity and engagement.

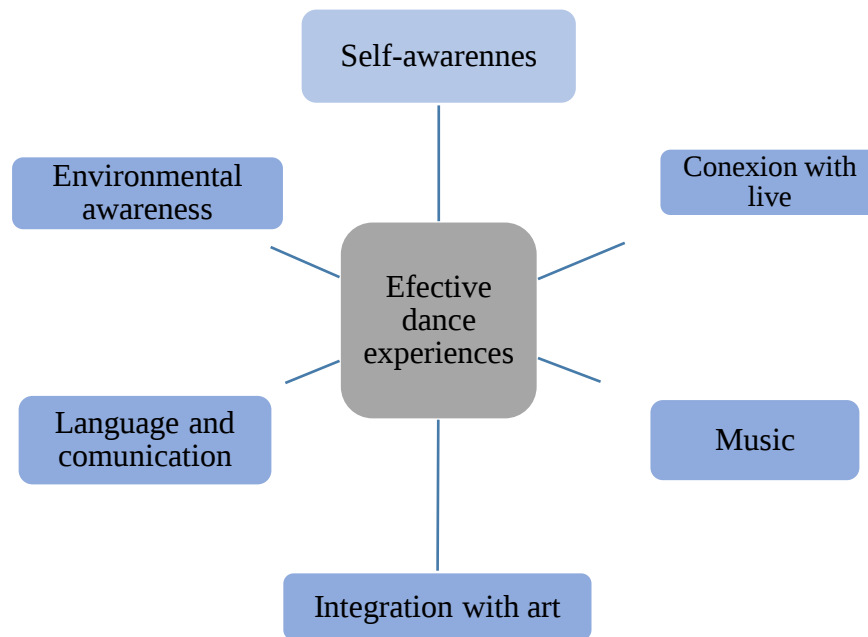


Figure 1: Factors for effective dance experiences

## 7. DRAMATIC PLAYS: A WINDOW TO EXPRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT

Dramatic play is a form of expressive activity that involves communicating through bodily actions and it offers a unique opportunity for children's holistic development. Children engage their entire bodies, emotions, and imagination as they mimic actions, objects, and animals, and this fosters their affective, social, cognitive, and motor skills (Conde and Viciano, 1997).

In the realm of dramatic play, a fictional space emerges between the inner world of the child and the external reality. Within this safe haven, feelings, emotions, and ideas are freely explored, providing a powerful instrument for socialisation. Children find a medium to express their inner experiences, developing their self-awareness and self-concept.

The potentialities of dramatic play are manifold:

- Language acquisition: children gain exposure to diverse languages and linguistic structures through the imitation of characters and scenarios (Mages, 2015).
- Social interactions: dramatic play fosters relationships and cooperation among peers, promoting empathy, teamwork, and conflict resolution skills (Mages, 2015).
- Self-discovery: through dramatic play, children gain a deeper understanding of themselves, their emotions, and their place in the world (Rojabi and Mustofa, 2021).
- Imagination and creativity: dramatic play ignites imagination and creativity, as children invent scenarios, develop characters, and express their unique perspectives (Rojabi and Mustofa, 2021).
- Movement and communication: dramatic play enhances movement skills, coordination, and spatial awareness, while also nurturing communication and expressive language abilities (Mages, 2015).

Dramatic play activities can be tailored to specific developmental stages to cater to different age groups:

- Symbolic/role play (4-5 years): adults serve as mirrors, providing models for imitation and fostering early language development.

- Dramatic play (6-8 years): simultaneous activities engage all children, encouraging collaborative storytelling and role-playing.
- Creative drama or drama making (9-13 years): subgroups work together to create and perform original plays, enhancing imagination, and problem-solving skills.
- Collective creation (14-17 years): more elaborate and rehearsed productions emerge, allowing for deeper exploration of themes and topics.

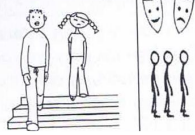
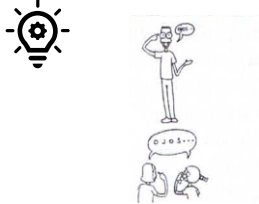
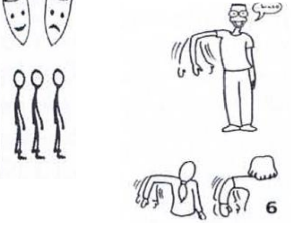
For effective implementation of dramatic play activities, educators should consider the following teaching aspects:

- Expression and creativity: activities should encourage diverse forms of expression, fostering children's creative potential.
- Imitation, movement, and gestures: games and movements, as well as manual and gestural gestures should be incorporated to engage all sensory aspects.
- Developmental flexibility: activities should be adapted to accommodate unexpected changes and individual needs.
- Verbalisation and storytelling: encourage children to verbalise stories and so enhance language development and communication skills.
- Creative freedom: respect children's creative freedom and allow them to express themselves authentically.
- Challenging stereotypes: place children in unfamiliar situations to break down stereotypes and promote empathy.
- Objects as stimuli: use objects to spark imagination and invite action and make learning more engaging.

## 7.1. SUBSECTION ABOUT MOTOR STORIES

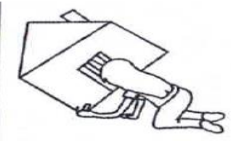
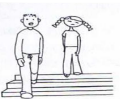
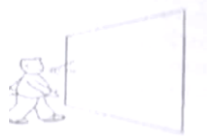
It is a performed story, a **collectively experienced tale** with its own characteristics and objectives (Conde, 2011)

- It consists of **performing** a series of exercises that correspond to the **actions narrated in a story**.
- It enables the **development of motor skills** (Viciano et al., 1997).
- It impacts on **expressive capacity**.
- The pupils **become the protagonists** as they portray the story and this enables them to imagine.
- It serves as a preliminary step to **written storytelling**.
- It is a **source of motivation** because it awakens interest in stories, in discovering people, and helps them get started with the **basic elements of culture** (i.e., socialisation norms).

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Material:</b> Handkerchief<br><b>Location:</b> Track sports center                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>PINOCCHIO</b>                                                                      |
| <b>Initial part:</b> Commentary tale. Someone in the group tells their version of the story.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |
| <b><u>Reading</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b><u>Story instructions</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                        | <b><u>Representative image</u></b>                                                    |
| <p><i>Once upon a time there was a carpenter called Gepetto, who was very lonely. At home he was very bored and had nobody to talk to.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <p>We go down the stairs looking bored, unable to speak, imitating Gepetto.</p>                                                                                                                         |    |
| <p><i>One day Gepetto had an idea and decided to make a doll from wood so that he would have some company.</i></p> <p><i>He started with the head and the trunk, then added arms and feet. When he had all those parts, he continued with the hair, then the eyebrows, eyes, and eyelashes, and the nose, mouth, and ears.</i></p>                                                                                         | <p>Like Gepetto, we show that we have an idea.</p> <p>Subsequently, we touch the parts of the body that the narrator indicates.</p>                                                                     |    |
| <p><i>When it was finished, Gepetto was very happy. He had made a very good doll and began to test how it moved.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>In pairs we pretend to be puppets, where one person is the puppet and the other moves them as if they had an imaginary string (2 min.) and then we change which person plays the puppet (2 min.)</p> |    |
| <p><i>Gepetto then had to give it a name, but what? Which one do you think he chose? PINOCCHIO!</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>Together, we make the letters on the floor.</p>                                                                                                                                                      | <b>PINOCCHIO</b>                                                                      |
| <p><i>That same night, a fairy godmother, seeing that Gepetto was bored because Pinocchio did not speak, took pity on him, and gave life to Pinocchio while Gepetto slept.</i></p> <p><i>The next morning, when Gepetto got up, he found that Pinocchio was no longer looking out the window. Instead, he was looking at him... and Pinocchio learned to move like Gepetto and did everything Gepetto told him to.</i></p> | <p>In pairs, the mirror game is played, where one person copies what the other does.</p>                                                                                                                |  |
| <p><i>The days passed and they did everything together from the moment they got up. They stretched, had breakfast, brushed their teeth, got ready to go out and did all the housework and carpentry work, until night came and they fell exhausted into the bed...</i></p>                                                                                                                                                 | <p>Representation of all the daily activities mentioned.</p>                                                                                                                                            |  |
| <p><i>One day Gepetto realised that Pinocchio was like a child, and as a child, he would have to go to school and meet the rest of the boys and girls in the town, to learn all the games that Gepetto had played as a child, such as the game of catch...</i></p> <p><i>Or the little blind hen...</i></p>                                                                                                                | <p>We play a game of catch where the person who the narrator catches loses.</p> <p>Then we play blind man's hen.</p>                                                                                    |  |
| <b>NOW YOU CONTINUE TELLING THE STORY...</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Material:</b> Objects that serve as tableware, hoops, tires, and benches<br><b>Location:</b> Track sports center                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD</b>                                                         |
| <b>Initial part:</b> Commentary tale. Someone in the group tells their version of the story.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                       |
| <b>Reading</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Story instructions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Representative image</b>                                                           |
| <i>Once upon a time there was a very pretty little girl. Her mother had made her a red cape and the girl wore it so often that everyone called her Little Red Riding Hood. Little Red Riding Hood was a very good girl and helped her mother a lot. Each day she set the table, including the glasses and the dishes.</i>                                                                                                                                           | <p>Let's set the table! Previously we showed the pupils how to set the table for eating (using basic objects).</p> <p>The game consists of transporting the materials and placing them correctly on the table (a painted rectangle on the floor). They can only carry one at a time and must try to be faster than the naughty child assigned to their table to prevent them from finishing their work.</p> |    |
| <p><i>One day, Little Red Riding Hood didn't have to go to school and as always, she got up and started helping her mother. Her mother asked her to take some cakes to her grandmother who lived on the other side of the forest, recommending that she not linger along the way, since crossing the forest was very dangerous, as the wolf was always lurking there.</i></p> <p><i>Little Red Riding Hood picked up the basket with the cakes and set off.</i></p> | <p>We nod our heads, understanding the mother's instructions.</p> <p>Little Red Riding Hood's basket.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |   |
| <p><i>Little Red Riding Hood left the house and found a river.</i></p> <p><i>Once she managed to cross the river, she continued her journey through the forest and, to her surprise, she came across a huge rock that she had to pass somehow.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>We act out the departure from home and farewell to Little Red Riding Hood's mother.</p> <p>We jump a bank (any object where the children can climb) which we have climbed and must leap inside a hoop, symbolising the river and the rock.</p>                                                                                                                                                           |  |
| <p><i>In the distance, Little Red Riding Hood saw the wolf and tried to hide so that he would not find her.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>We play hide and seek. One child remains and counts while the others hide. When someone wants to save them, they must say 'Little Red Riding Hood' followed by the person's name in the place where that remaining person did the counting. Ex: 'Little Red Riding Hood for Harry'.</p>                                                                                                                  |  |
| <p><i>The wolf arrived at the house of the granny and called gently to the door. The old woman opened it, thinking it was Little Red Riding Hood.</i></p> <p><i>The wolf started to chase her.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>We are all wolves who, on all fours, chase a grandmother. We change who plays the granny.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |
| <p><i>The granny hid in her wardrobe so that the wolf wouldn't catch her.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>We hide behind the columns of the gym.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                       |
| <p><i>When alone in the room the wolf decided to occupy the granny's place in the bed to confuse Little Red Riding Hood.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>We pretend that we get into bed and prepare to sleep.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  |
| <p><i>The wolf did not have to wait long, as Little Red Riding Hood arrived immediately and very happy.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>We act out the scene in pairs, with one playing the wolf and the other Little Red Riding Hood.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                       |

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <p><i>The girl approached the bed and saw that her grandmother was very different.</i></p> <p><i>'Grandma, Granny, what big eyes you have!'</i></p> <p><i>'They are to see you better', said the wolf, trying to imitate the voice of the grandmother.</i></p> <p><i>'Grandma, Granny, what big ears you have!'</i></p> <p><i>'They are to hear you better', continued the wolf.</i></p> <p><i>'Grandma, Granny, what big teeth you have!'</i></p> <p><i>'They are for... eating you better!', and saying this, the evil wolf pounced on the little girl, just as he had done with the granny.</i></p> |                                                                  |  |
| <p><i>Little Red Riding Hood, when she saw the wolf pounce, yelled, 'Help, help, the wolf wants to eat me!'. Little Red Riding Hood ran throughout the house, preventing the wolf from catching her, while he ran after her.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>We run through space, pretending that the wolf chases us.</p> |  |
| <p><b>NOW YOU CONTINUE TELLING THE STORY...</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                  |  |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Material:</b> letters/chalk for drawing, continuous paper and pencils/pens.<br><b>Location:</b> track sports center                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>THE THREE LITTLE PIGS</b>                                                          |
| <b>Initial part:</b> commentary tale. Someone in the group tells their version of the story.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                       |
| <b>Reading</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Story instructions</b>                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Representative image</b>                                                           |
| <p><i>The little pigs lived at home with their mother because they were little...</i></p> <p><i>Every day they had a routine. They got up, they washed, and they used the bathroom. They dressed, had breakfast, brushed their teeth and prepared their backpacks...</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Representation of everything that the narrator says.                                                                                                                                                   |    |
| <p><i>After getting ready, they went to school where they learned many things. That day in language lessons they were taught letters. Do you want to know what they were?</i></p> <p><i>The A...</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Hunt for letters: letters are drawn and the pupils must go looking for them.                                                                                                                           |    |
| <p><i>In maths, they learnt about geometric shapes like...</i></p> <p><i>The square...</i></p> <p><i>The cylinder...</i></p> <p><i>The rectangle...</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | The pupils must go and touch elements of the gym that are squares, rectangles, cylinders, etc. (e.g., table, chair, railing, etc.). If they cannot find them, they can represent them with their body. |    |
| <p><i>It was time to go home. Along the way the little pigs decided that they were grown up and could live alone. So, when they got home, they told their mother that they were each going to build a house and that the next day they would leave to start their work.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Each one draws a house on the continuous paper.                                                                                                                                                        |  |
| <p><i>Each of them built a house in a different way. One used straw, another wood, and the last brick. At the end they were very tired, but they were happy.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | We go down the stairs, pretending that we are tired.                                                                                                                                                   |  |
| <p><i>Until one day this news reached the ears of the wolf. The poor wolf was hungry because he couldn't hunt any animals in the forest, so he approached the town.</i></p> <p><i>The wolf went in search of the little pig called Juan. When he reached the house made of straw, he knocked on the door. Juan was shaking with fear because he knew that the wolf wanted to eat him. Seeing that he didn't open it, the wolf began to blow and blow... until the house fell down.</i></p> | <p>We pretend that we are hungry.</p> <p>Knock on the door...</p> <p>Blow up balloons.</p>                                                                                                             |  |
| <p><i>When this happened, the wolf ran after the little pig, and he headed to Pedro's house. There the wolf did the same and also managed to blow that house down.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Blow...                                                                                                                                                                                                |  |
| <p><i>Both the pigs ran to Felipa, who had a brick house...</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | We run for the gym, pretending that we are going to Felipa's house.                                                                                                                                    |  |
| <b>NOW YOU CONTINUE TELLING THE STORY...</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                       |

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

Body expression serves as a cornerstone for early childhood development by providing a foundation for self-expression, emotional intelligence, and social-emotional growth. By incorporating body expression into early childhood education, educators can nurture children's holistic development, empowering them to become confident communicators and empathetic individuals.

Rhythmic activities and dances provide a valuable framework for fostering creativity, movement skills, and social-emotional development in early childhood education. By incorporating these elements into teaching, educators can create a stimulating and engaging learning environment that nurtures children's holistic growth.

Finally, by embracing dramatic play, educators can provide children with a nurturing environment where they can explore their emotions, develop their imagination, and enhance their social, cognitive, and motor skills. Through these engaging experiences, children embark on a journey of self-discovery and creative expression, laying the foundation for lifelong learning and personal growth.

**9. PROPOSED TASK**

Task: design two games to develop body expression explaining the rules and organisation (time, materials, groups) for a class of 20 five-year-olds.

**10. SOME GAMES FOR PRACTICAL SESSION**

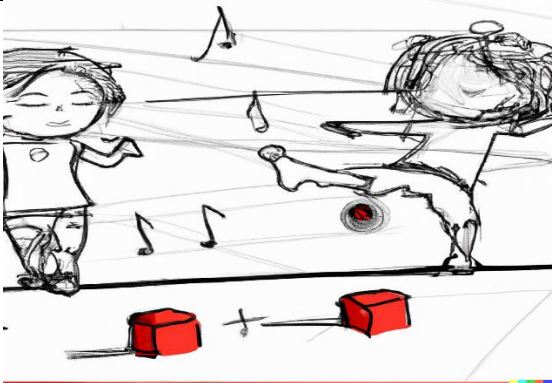
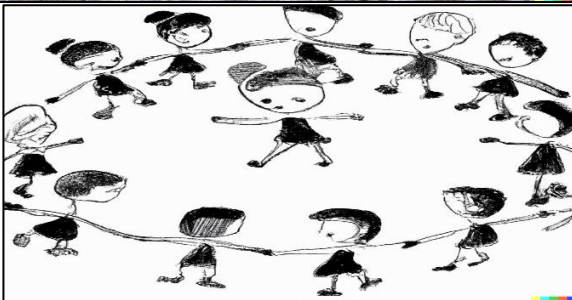
The mirror: pupils work in pairs. One pupil moves body parts and makes facial expressions and the other one tries to imitate.

Dance and stop: pupils dance while music plays. When the teacher stops the music, the pupils must stay in position without moving.

Guess characters: One pupil must imitate a specific well-known character. The rest of the pupils must guess which character is being imitated. Possible characters: Mickey Mouse, Snow White, Simba...

The orchestra director: pupils make a circle with one of them in the middle. The pupils choose one leader while the pupil in the middle tightly closes their eyes. Then music sounds and the pupils in the circle must imitate the dance movements of the leader. The pupil in the middle must find out who is the leader.

|            |                                                                                      |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The mirror |  |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                    |                                                                                     |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dance and stop     |   |
| Guess characters   |   |
| Orchestra director |  |

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## **TOPIC 4: COOPERATIVE GAMES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

In this topic, the focus is on the integration of cooperative games into educational curricula, and we explore three key learning outcomes. The topic begins by elucidating the concept of cooperative games, defining cooperative learning and its features as a teaching model where pupils learn with and from other pupils. Emphasis is on the potentialities and values that cooperative games bring to the educational landscape, particularly in instilling values crucial for positive social dynamics. Peace education stands out as a central value promoted by cooperative games that foster understanding, tolerance, and conflict resolution.

We explain that the collaborative and supportive nature of these games extends beyond specific activities and influences the overall perceptions of the educational institution. The topic further outlines design guidelines for teaching cooperative games, emphasising principles such as positive interdependence, individual and group responsibility, promoting interaction, appropriate use of collaborative skills, and group processing. Additionally, the discussion extends to an exploration of cooperative play in early childhood education, highlighting its impact on the assimilation of norms, overcoming egocentrism, movement exploration, the ludic nature, and the cultivation of a cooperative socio-affective climate. The topic concludes by affirming cooperative games as powerful tools for cultivating essential values that offer a holistic approach to value-based education that enriches teaching and learning.

### **1. LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

There are three learning outcomes in the teaching guide related to cooperative games:

- Recognise the value of cooperative play as opposed to competitive play in children's development, and the ability to design spaces and times for play in the educational project
- Ability to design and structure methodological resources, spaces, and materials around specific games: play in open and closed spaces or individual and collective games.
- Ability to design, apply, and evaluate play-motor proposals aimed at self-knowledge, discovery, and relationship with the environment, and to facilitate relationships with objects and classmates.

### **2. CONCEPT OF COOPERATIVE GAMES**

#### **2.1. DEFINITION AND FEATURES OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING**

Cooperative learning (CL) started as an active methodology used by teachers to promote personal relationships and positive work habits that foster self-esteem and individual and group well-being (Omecaña and Ruiz-Omecaña, 2016; Saéz de Ocáriz, 2016). CL as a working method is based on working in small groups where pupils perceive that they can achieve the objectives or carry out the tasks if the rest of the group also achieves this objective (Saéz de Ocáriz, 2016; Velázquez, 2010). Therefore, this working method is based on the collective construction of knowledge and the development of social skills where each member of the group is responsible for their own learning as well as for the progress of their peers.

Some CL methods are learning together (Johson and Johnson, 2002) or the cooperative puzzle (Aronson, 1978; Slavin, 1996), among others (Saéz de Ocáriz, 2016). Today, CL is considered as a *'pedagogical model in which pupils learn with and from other pupils through a teaching-learning approach that facilitates and enhances this positive interaction and interdependence and in which teacher and pupils act as co-learners'* (Fernández-Río, 2014, p. 6). *This makes the teaching-learning process much more enriching for everyone* (Fernández-Río, 2021).

## 2.2. POTENTIALITIES AND PROMOTING VALUES

In the current educational landscape, there is a growing emphasis on values that contribute to the comprehensive development of individuals, leading to an increased interest in alternative teaching approaches. One notable method gaining traction is the integration of cooperative games into educational curricula, recognised as potential drivers for instilling values crucial for fostering positive social dynamics (Morschheuser, 2017). The involvement of children in cooperative learning programs has demonstrated diverse benefits, not only academically but also in cultivating essential socioemotional competencies.

In this context, peace education stands out as a central value that cooperative games can instil. Peace education, characterised by the promotion of understanding, tolerance, and conflict resolution, aligns seamlessly with the cooperative nature of these games (Martínez, 2016). Through shared decision-making and conflict resolution mechanisms inherent in cooperative gameplay, individuals develop skills necessary for maintaining peaceful relationships, contributing significantly to heightened acceptance among participants and fostering an environment where individuals embrace diversity (Martínez, 2016). Furthermore, cooperative games also play a crucial role in cultivating respect for others and solidarity. Children engaged in cooperative learning programs exhibit a more positive assessment of the school environment with a notable reduction in rejection towards peers with learning difficulties, reflecting the inclusive nature of cooperative learning and promoting empathy and understanding (Morschheuser, 2017). Besides, the collaborative and supportive nature of these programs extends beyond specific activities and influences the overall perceptions of the educational institution (Carter, 2011).

Moreover, the cooperative dynamics of these games facilitate collaboration, integration, and socialisation, as participants work towards shared objectives and learn the importance of collective effort and the value of integrating diverse skills and perspectives (Morschheuser, 2017). The collaborative nature of these games necessitates active engagement with diverse perspectives, encouraging participants to appreciate the contributions of each team member. Thus, cooperative games serve as experiential platforms for participants to internalise and practice respect for others and solidarity. Through shared experiences and joint problem-solving, individuals develop crucial social skills that contribute to their overall well-rounded development (Morschheuser, 2017).

Communication emerges as a pivotal aspect of cooperative games, playing a fundamental role in achieving shared goals. The interactive nature of these games necessitates effective communication for successful collaboration, and this enhances communication abilities and emphasises the importance of open dialogue and information exchange in a collaborative setting. Participation in cooperative learning programs is associated with increased self-esteem and a heightened sense of individual control that empowers children with a sense of agency and accomplishment (Martínez, 2016). Additionally, cooperative learning fosters a greater disposition towards altruism, as individuals learn to work collaboratively and support one another. The development of norms favouring high performance can also contribute to a positive and achievement-oriented group dynamic (Martínez, 2016).

## 3. DESIGN GUIDELINES WHEN TEACHING COOPERATIVES GAMES

The effective integration of cooperative games into educational settings requires a teaching approach guided by well-defined design principles (Bonano, 2008). This discourse presents key design guidelines aimed at optimising the teaching and learning experience within the framework of cooperative games. The outlined principles draw from established literature and pedagogical theories to provide a comprehensive understanding of the nuances involved.

Thus, cooperative learning is based on the following principles (Figure 1) (Fernández-Río, 2021; Saéz de Ocáriz, 2016; Velázquez, 2010):

1. Positive interdependence. The effort of group members is necessary for group success. Therefore, team members are obliged to rely on each other to achieve the goal – based on the premise that the success of the rest of the group benefits us and the failure of the rest of our group harms us (summarised in the phrase ‘everybody wins and nobody loses’).
2. Individual and group responsibility. All learners in a group are responsible for doing their share of the work and for mastering all the material to be learnt (summarised in the phrase ‘we must all contribute’). This in turn generates a group responsibility that strengthens the acquisition of common goals.
3. Promoting interaction. Group members encourage and stimulate each other's learning by giving each other feedback, questioning each other's reasoning and conclusions, and encouraging each other (summarised in the phrase ‘we help each other’).
4. Appropriate use of collaborative/interpersonal skills. Group members need to create a trusting environment based on effective communication to coordinate efforts; therefore, pupils are encouraged and assisted to develop and practice trust-building, leadership, decision-making, communication and conflict management skills.
5. Group processing. Team members set group goals, reflect on and evaluate actions taken to make decisions and identify changes they will make to function more effectively in the future.

Unfortunately, the relationships between members within a group are not always adequate and more often than desired, one member of the group (the leader) makes all the decisions and does much of the work (Fernández-Río, 2021). This author proposes the equal participation of members as no one is expendable and this approach means equal opportunities for success.

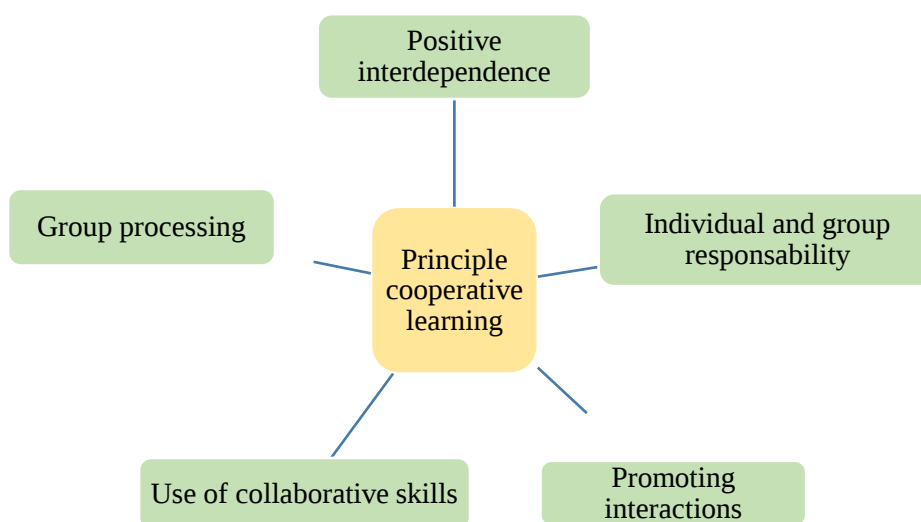


Figure 1. Principles for cooperative learning

#### 4. AN APPROACH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

In the realm of early childhood education (0-6 years), the incorporation of cooperative play has emerged as a pivotal teaching strategy that fosters holistic development and socialisation among young learners (Ramani and Brownell, 2014). This academic discourse endeavours to explore the multifaceted impact of cooperative games in this critical developmental stage, with a specific focus on the assimilation of norms, overcoming egocentrism, movement exploration, ludicism,

and the cultivation of a cooperative socio-affective atmosphere. The following are what we believe to be the main keys to this process (Figure 2):

#### 4.1. ASSIMILATION OF NORMS

The introduction of cooperative play in early childhood serves as a foundational platform for the assimilation of social norms (Ramani and Brownell, 2014). Through cooperative games, young children learn to navigate shared spaces and activities by gradually internalising the principles of collaboration and mutual respect.

#### 4.2. OVERCOMING EGOCENTRISM

Cooperative play has a pivotal role in mitigating the inherent egocentrism of early childhood development (Ramani and Brownell, 2014). By engaging in collaborative endeavours, children learn to consider the viewpoints of others, and this paves the way for enhanced social cognition and empathy.

#### 4.3. EXPLORATION OF MOVEMENT POSSIBILITIES

The early years are a critical period for motor skill development, and cooperative play offers an ideal context for the exploration of movement possibilities (Sutapa et al., 2021). The ludic and collaborative nature of these activities motivates children to engage in physical exploration, thereby enhancing their motor proficiency.

#### 4.4. LUDIC NATURE OF COOPERATIVE PLAY

The ludic aspect of cooperative play is fundamental in creating an environment where learning is inherently enjoyable (Garaigordobil et al., 2022). Through play, children develop cognitive, social, and emotional skills organically, establishing a positive foundation for future learnings.

#### 4.5. COOPERATIVE SOCIO-AFFECTIVE CLIMATE

Perhaps one of the most significant contributions of cooperative play to early childhood education is the cultivation of a cooperative socio-affective climate. The collaborative nature of play activities nurtures positive social interactions, laying the groundwork for the development of healthy relationships and emotional well-being (Garaigordobil et al., 2022).

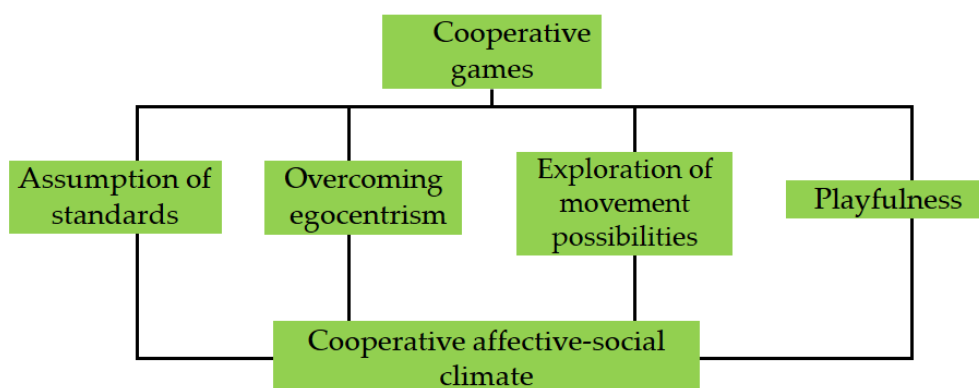


Figure 2. Cooperative learning in early childhood

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, cooperative games emerge as powerful tools for the cultivation of values essential for the development of individuals and society at large. Drawing upon the realms of peace

education, respect for others, solidarity, collaboration, integration, socialisation, and communication, these games offer a holistic approach to value-based education. The integration of cooperative play in early childhood education is a sound approach that addresses various facets of holistic development. By emphasising the assimilation of norms, overcoming egocentrism, movement exploration, ludicism, and the creation of a cooperative socio-affective atmosphere, educators can provide a rich and developmentally appropriate learning environment for young learners.

**6. PROPOSED TASK**

Task: design two cooperative games for a class of 25 five-year-old pupils and organise the material, space, and time. Design a rubric where you consider the level of cooperation, and the dimensions of the game (motor, emotional, social, and cognitive).

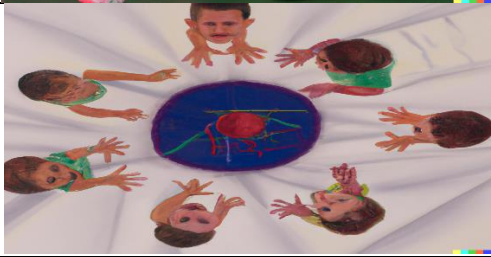
**7. SOME GAMES FOR A PRACTICAL SESSION:**

Meteorites. Children try to prevent balloons from touching the ground. Note: if the teacher detects that a child is not participating, it is recommended to make smaller groups in which each time a member of the group must hit a balloon and a goal is scored when all the children have hit the balloon without it falling to the ground.

Parachute. Children must hold a parachute with a foam ball in the middle. Each child is assigned a colour. When the teacher calls out a colour, all children with that colour must swap positions without the ball falling out of the parachute.

Crossing the lava volcano. Children stand in groups on bricks and cross the room without touching the ground.

Bench: all the pupils must get on a bench. Then they must order themselves by height without touching the ground

|            |                                                                                      |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Meteorites |  |
| Parachute  |  |

**Table 1:** example of cooperative games

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## TOPIC 5: SYMBOLIC PLAY AND ITS VALUE AS A FORM OF ACCESS TO REALITY: THE CLASSROOM ORGANISATION OF MATERIALS, SPACES, AND ACTIVITIES

### 1. SYMBOLIC PLAY

#### 1.1. Definition and stages

According to Rivière (2001), as cited in Ruiz-Velasco and Abad (2011), individuals utilise symbols to communicate with others and themselves, regulate their behaviour, represent reality, and make inferences. They relate to others through symbols and think using them (p. 35). But what is a symbol? According to Rivière, they are meaningful actions, that is, forms of communicative interaction. Ruiz-Velasco and Abad (2011) emphasise that a symbolic function is the ability to imagine and remember situations, objects, animals, or actions that are not present or perceived by the senses.

Turner (2008) states that a symbol is something that signifies, represents, or recalls something through the association of fact or thought. Additionally, Ruiz-Velasco and Abad (2011) highlight that a child expresses themselves through symbols and can use objects for this purpose. A child will manifest symbolism through objects and their own bodily actions before expressing themselves through words. But we are also capable of projecting things that do not exist in our thoughts. Therefore, it is necessary for the child to understand the meaning of these objects/actions within the society they are in, or in other words, to assign them an interpretation. Thus, the relationship with objects allows them to understand the world. Let us say that when **an action contains meaning, it becomes a symbol**. This is where the 'as if' comes into play, where a real action (e.g., drinking from a glass) can turn into a projected one, into what we physically perform with movements like the real ones that have been observed or imagined (e.g., pretending to drink from an imaginary glass, Figure 1).



Figure 1. Fernando simulating drinking (Ruiz-Velasco and Abad, 2011)

In relation to the previous topics, it is worth noting that Piaget associates the use of symbols with action and sensorimotor schemes. This imaginary play takes place in a space and time, with objects and others. Since the symbolism expressed in play is carried out through the child's own body and actions in spaces and with objects, it is necessary to mention pre-symbolic play (which occurs at the age of one to two years). Pre-symbolic play is characterised by the fact that its

referent must be present; therefore, it consists of activities prior to the acquisition of symbols that involve **the child's body interacting with objects (and actions) and adults**. Thus, some examples include filling and emptying containers (e.g., with water or sand), building and destroying, wrapping oneself up and hiding, or playing chase, searching for sensorimotor pleasure, etc. (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Examples of creating and destroying games (Ruiz-Velasco and Abad, 2011)

## 1.2. Types of symbolic play

According to Piaget, the terms ‘ritualisation’ and ‘symbolic schema’ refer to the transition between sensorimotor and symbolic play. Ritualisation involves the repetition of a sequence without variation (e.g., actions related to sleeping such as lying down and closing the eyes while using a pillow), while the symbolic schema refers to the use of these actions outside of their context and with unrelated objects (e.g., employing a towel or clothing as a pillow). This usage of unrelated items will eventually allow for the abandonment of objects and the representation of actions alone, as shown in Figure 1. It should be noted that this symbolic schema is initially performed on oneself (e.g., pretending to sleep) and is later projected onto others (e.g., making a teddy bear sleep), causing them to perform the action. This is known as decentration. Finally, it will involve the assimilation of one object into another (e.g., pretending to ride a horse with a stick, also referred to as decontextualisation, Marjanovic et al., 1999) or of one person into another (e.g., imitating people from their immediate environment such as parents). Further examples of symbolic play with the assimilation of one object into another include: i) a shopping cart becomes a shopping trolley when pretending to be at a store, ii) a small milk carton becomes a toadstool, iii) chairs and a blanket transform into a tent, iv) Lego bricks become cars, v) a box becomes a boat, or v) a skipping rope becomes a fireman's hose. Finally, symbolic play involving role representation will appear between the ages of four and seven, making symbolism collective (e.g., cops and robbers, moms and dads, doctors and patients, etc.). As pupils become more comfortable with their peer group, they will be able to represent more complex actions, involving a succession of scenes (Vallejo, 2007).

In relation to its worth, play serves different functions: i) it provides access to more sources of information; ii) it helps consolidate the mastery of skills and concepts; iii) it promotes and maintains effective intellectual functioning with cognitive operations; and finally, iv) it fosters creativity through the playful application of skills and concepts (Hughes, 2018).

To facilitate this type of play, various materials can be used, such as fabrics, boxes, tires, sponges, cushions, plastic cups, etc. However, these materials are not typically associated with physical education. Let us explore the possibilities of materials and spaces for designing our games. As the environment and objects allow for improvisation and recreation, including the ability to

imagine, fantasise, and create stories, sequences, and locations as you go along while constructing scene changes, the possibilities for play expand (Vallejo, 2007).

## 2. SPACES AND MATERIALS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The school space comprises various scenarios and premises (Figure 3) that enable learning situations and must be considered when planning activities as the organisation and distribution will influence the skills and content to be worked on (Torres, 2015). Furthermore, it is important to consider that this space should be stable and safe, contributing to the pupils' comfort and so fostering their creativity and inviting them to play. Simultaneously, it should enhance opportunities for knowledge, exploration, and inquiry and enable pupils to experiment and create (Torres, 2015).

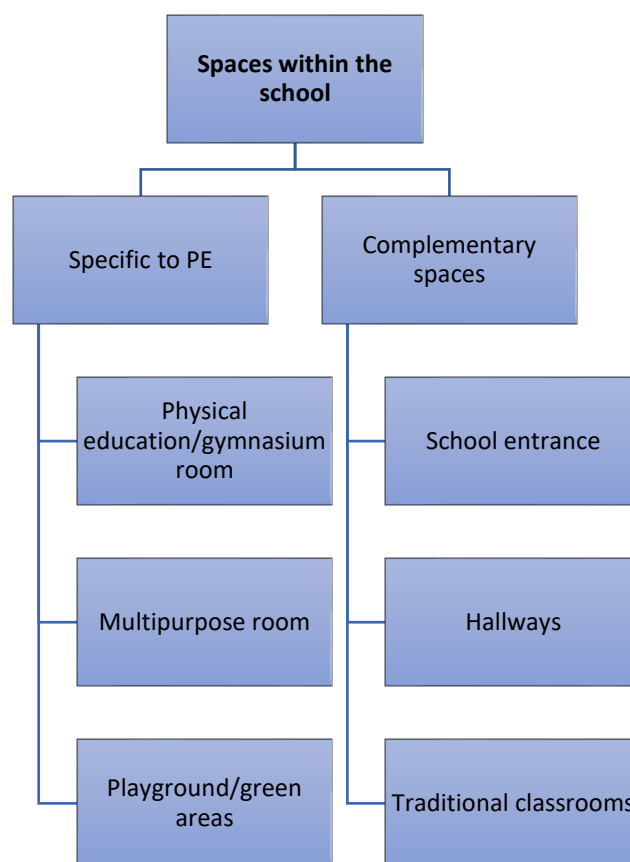


Figure 3. Spaces in the school and their affinity with physical education (Adapted from Torres, 2015)

Meanwhile, different materials will allow for the structuring, organisation, and creation of learning situations and environments (Torres, 2015). Some examples that can be found include consumable materials (e.g., pencils, chalk, and paper); items for play as a vehicle for learning (e.g., board games, chess, building blocks, and drawings); recycled ones for investigation (e.g., cans, jars, bottle caps, bottles, and paper); and furniture (e.g., tables and chairs) (Torres, 2015). Within the materials specific to the field of physical education, we find traditional ones provided by specialised companies (Figure 4), such as wall bars, cones, hoops and balls, as well as those for motor development (e.g., foam balls, blocks, tunnels, and footprints), or expression (such as paints and fabrics). Additionally, we can use unconventional, recycled, and self-made items in activities like juggling with balloons and tin-can stilts (Torres, 2015).

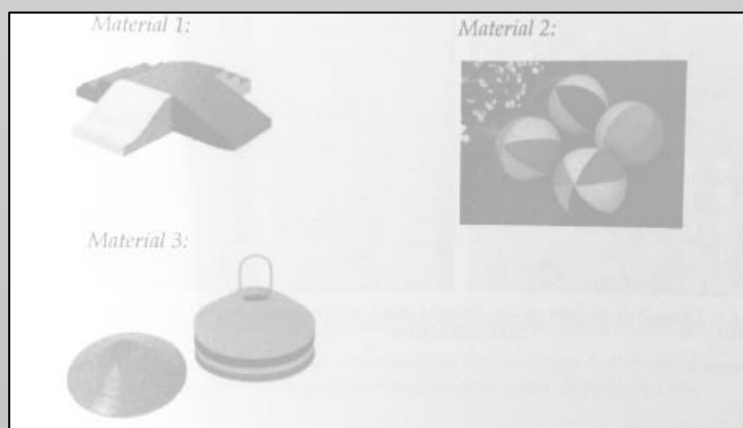


Figure 4. Examples of materials for physical education

It is essential to remember that materials should be suitable for the age and characteristics of the pupils, as well as aligned with the intended learning objectives, while also being motivating and safe.

### PRACTICAL ACTIVITY

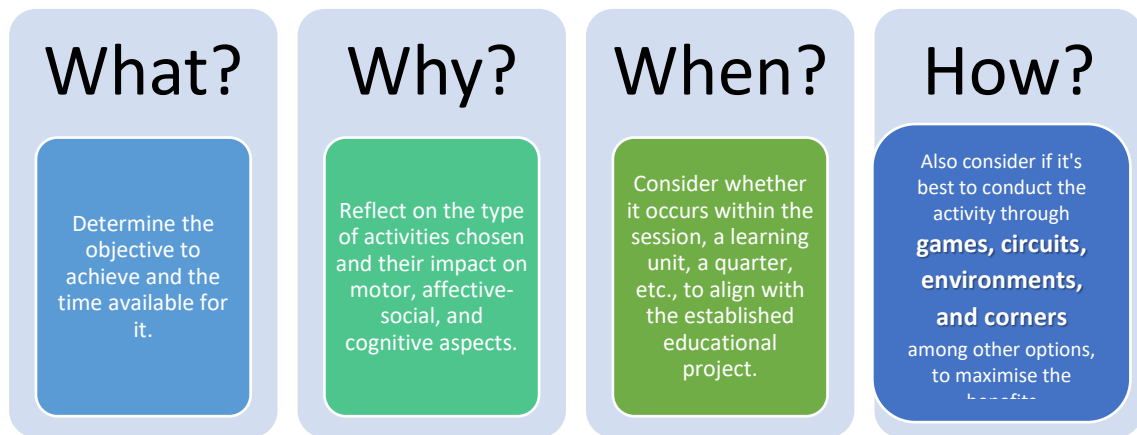
For what purposes would you use the following materials?



Answer: there is no material that is better than others; they can be used for any objective if they meet the criteria (e.g., safety, motivation, age-appropriateness, and alignment with the session's objectives).

### 3. ACTIVITY ORGANISATION

According to Torres (2015), when organising activities, teachers should consider: **What? When? How? Why?**



**3.1. Motor circuits** are a set of motor exercises organised and structured to enable pupils to assimilate and improve their motor skills. These circuits can be linear/open (Figure 5, left) or circular/closed (right), depending on whether they have a defined start and finish, and they can also be structured into stations, with each one dedicated to a different activity or task, and the teacher determining when pupils should change stations.

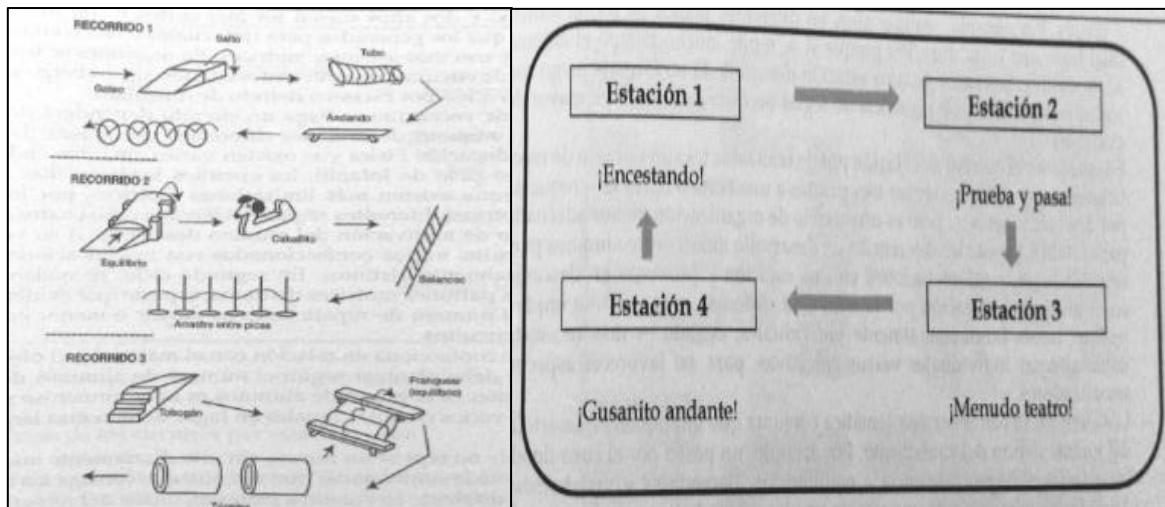


Figure 5. Different types of motor circuits

**3.2. Learning corners** are designated areas within the classroom where pupils simultaneously engage in various learning activities. This approach caters to different paces and interests (Figure 6).

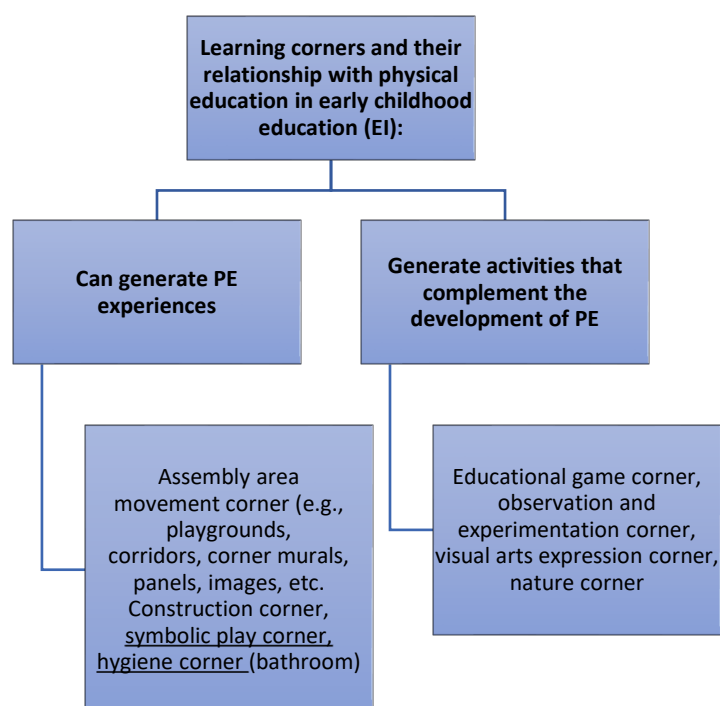
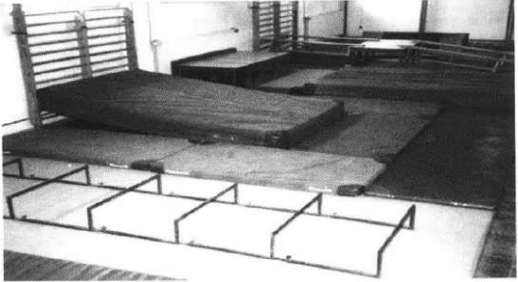
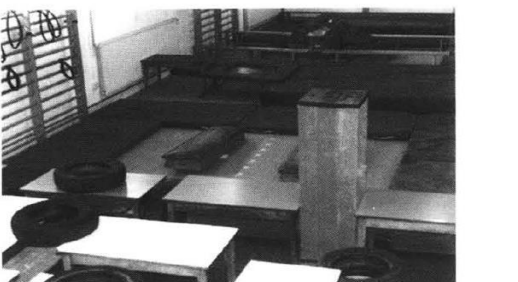


Figure 6. Learning corners and their relationship with physical education in early childhood education (modified from Torres, 2015).

**3.3. Learning environments** involve organising space and materials to create an atmosphere where learning occurs spontaneously. In these environments, pupils take the lead, while teachers become organisers and facilitators for learning. Pupils navigate through the environment, performing actions as they choose and making decisions independently (Table 1).

Table 1. Examples of learning environments (retrieved from Mediara, 1999).

|                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Figura 2.</i></p> | <p><b>Summer camp.</b> Obstacle course, cliffs, slopes, caves, ravines, grottos, trails, and climbing rocks.</p>                                                                                                                             |
|  <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Figura 3.</i></p> | <p><b>Fantasyland.</b> Inspired by the story of Peter Pan. Simulates the home of the Lost Boys, with a corner for young explorers, a factory for flying children, a ship for the wicked pirates, and a reservation for Native Americans.</p> |

|                                                                                                    |                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>Figura 4.</p> | <p><b>Fair.</b> Includes throwing attractions (e.g., shooting booths).</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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## **TOPIC 6. GAME ADAPTATIONS FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

*Chapter: 'Inclusive education, functional diversity and specific needs for educational support in children's motor skills.' In the book: Didactics of the Education Physical in Infant Education (in Spanish). Authors: Barcala, R., Abelairas, C. & Gil-Madrona, P. (2016).*

### **9.1. Introduction**

Inclusive education is a paradigm that aims to cater to all children throughout their learning process, with a special focus on those who are more vulnerable and emphasising equality over differences (Parrilla Latas, 2002).

In this model, educational institutions strive for comprehensive education, starting from the personal characteristics of each pupil and creating a facilitating environment by offering the support they may need. It is essential to differentiate between the term *inclusion* and the traditional one of *integration*. While the latter seeks to integrate pupils with special educational needs (SEN) into a system designed for those without such requirements, the concept of inclusion is more comprehensive, as it includes the adaptation and modification of the system, method, or environment. It is the creation of a supportive environment, with a focus on those who have greater difficulty adapting. In this regard, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2009) defines inclusion as the response to the diversity of each child, making them active participants in their educational process.

Based on the Warnock Report (1978), in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, the term SEN was incorporated into teaching manuals and discussions about education. In 1990, the General Education Act (LOGSE) introduced this concept in Spain.

The fundamental shift toward inclusive education is made possible by the universalisation of education. Thus, the Improvement of Educational Quality Act 8/2013 (LOMCE) of 9 December 2013 states: 'All pupils possess talent, but the nature of this talent differs among them. Consequently, the educational system must have the necessary mechanisms to recognise and nurture it. Recognising this diversity among pupils in their abilities and expectations is the first step toward the development of an educational structure'. The concept of catering to diversity is in line with the idea of an inclusive school, and the educational institution is the gateway to creating support and learning for each child. Article 4 of Royal Decree (RD) 1630/2006 of 29 December 2006, establishes the minimum requirements for the second cycle of early childhood education (RD 1630/2006) and outlines four points that guide attention to diversity.

It is important to note that the traditional concept of *deficiency* has already been surpassed, with the understanding that a person's condition itself is not the relevant aspect, but rather their needs for personal, social relationships, and learning. This new concept refers to deficiencies not as intrinsic qualities of the individual, but as relational conditions. It is less concerned with what the individual is and more about what the school can do for them.

Table 9.1. Motor learning in early childhood education and curriculum implications

| <i>Article 8 of RD 1630/2006</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <i>Relationship with motor learning and physical education in early childhood education</i>                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Educational intervention must prioritise the diversity of pupils, <u>adapting educational practice to the personal characteristics, needs, interests, and cognitive style</u> of boys and girls because at this age the rhythm and maturation process are important.</i> | <i><u>The design of motor tasks should be adapted to each child's practice possibilities.</u> This does not imply that all tasks should be identical or necessarily pursue the same goal. Rather, each one should contribute to</i> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <i>the development of capacities and support the maturation process of each child.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <i>Educational authorities will establish procedures to identify those characteristics that may impact the learning progress of boys and girls. Likewise, they will facilitate the coordination of all sectors involved in the care of these pupils.</i> | <i>Motor diagnosis work should consider the biological, social, and cultural characteristics of the child. This diagnosis should be conducted collaboratively with other professionals from the school and educational community. The role of the teacher in this regard is fundamental.</i> |
| <i>Schools will take appropriate measures aimed at pupils who require specific educational support.</i>                                                                                                                                                  | <i>The school environment should be comfortable, and the physical education classroom should be organised to promote <u>maximum motor learning</u>.</i>                                                                                                                                      |
| <i>Schools will attend to children who have SEN, seeking the educational response that best fits their personal characteristics and needs.</i>                                                                                                           | <i><u>Play is the primary educational method in early childhood education. Schools should incorporate this methodology as the core of their teaching activities in their educational policies.</u></i>                                                                                       |

#### 9.4. Motor and sensory functional diversity in physical education

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF, 2001) focuses on a person's abilities to carry out different activities. These abilities do not centre on functional or structural deficits with motor or sensory implications, but rather on different ways of functioning, even if they differ from most individuals.

In the context of physical education, the most relevant aspects to consider are topographical localisation, physio-pathological origin, and sensory systems, as they greatly impact the design of motor tasks and their origins.

##### 9.4.1. Motor functional diversity

Motor functional diversity is a permanent or transitory condition that limits, alters, or modifies the musculoskeletal, neuromuscular, or nervous system, requiring the person to seek alternatives to perform everyday motor activities. Generally, motor limitations may represent a disadvantage compared to the majority of pupils, but do not always imply an impediment. The methodology of physical education classes should be planned so that tasks can be carried out without differentiation. If this is not possible, the best approach is to adapt the tasks to the person with the limitation. Finally, if adaptation is not possible due to the subject matter, the necessary educational support should be provided. It is important to note that motor functional diversity does not necessarily imply an intellectual impairment, although some people may have both.

Table 9.2. Topographical terminology of motor functional diversity

| TOPOGRAPHICAL LOCALISATION                                          |                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Impairment or paralysis                                             | Localised muscle weakness                                                                           |
| <i>Monoplegia</i> : impairment or paralysis of one limb             | <i>Monoparesis</i> : mild paralysis consisting of localised muscle weakness in one limb             |
| <i>Hemiplegia</i> : impairment or paralysis of one side of the body | <i>Hemiparesis</i> : mild paralysis consisting of localised muscle weakness on one side of the body |

|                                                                |                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Paraplegia</i> : impairment or paralysis of both legs       | <i>Paraparesis</i> : mild paralysis consisting of localised muscle weakness in both legs       |
| <i>Tetraplegia</i> : impairment or paralysis of all four limbs | <i>Tetraparesis</i> : mild paralysis consisting of localised muscle weakness in all four limbs |

Table 9.3. Main consequences related to the origin of motor functional diversity

|                |                                                                                                                           |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cerebral       | Cerebral palsy<br>Tumours<br>Traumatic brain injuries with cerebral mass or brain function involvement                    |
| Spinal         | Spina bifida<br>Degenerative spinal cord injuries                                                                         |
| Muscular       | Hereditary or acquired myopathies and muscular dystrophies                                                                |
| Osteoarticular | Temporary or permanent osteoarticular injuries<br>Congenital malformations or traumatic loss of body parts<br>Dystrophies |

#### 9.4.2. Sensory functional diversity

Sensory functional diversity is a permanent or transitory condition that limits, alters, or modifies the communication system or perception channels, requiring some form of assistance or modification of information transmission to carry out daily activities. In early childhood physical education, visual, and auditory sensory functional diversity are the most common types and have the greatest implications for the management and performance of games and motor tasks.

Table 9.4. Definitions of visual and auditory sensory functional diversity

| Visual sensory functional diversity                                                                                                             | Auditory sensory functional diversity                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Can manifest as total absence of vision (blindness) or as visual impairment, with significant visual acuity restriction even with optical aids. | Refers to the absence (deafness) or partial decrease in auditory capacity (hearing loss) to varying degrees, even with auditory aids. |

These manifestations of sensory functional diversity can occur together in the form of deaf-blindness.

### 9.5. General considerations for intervening with pupils with functional diversity through motor skills

The considerations that can help to adapt or modify the environment, task, or methodology based on the functional diversity required by the group are presented in Table 9.5.

Table 9.5. Possible adaptations or modifications for functional diversity in physical education  
**(important!)**

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adaptations or modifications to the environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose appropriate materials: balls of different sizes and textures, with bright colours, etc., to facilitate perception and increase sensory experiences.</li> <li>• Use various heights or an inclined rubber band so that all pupils can pass over or under.</li> <li>• Increase the size of images if there is a pupil with a visual impairment.</li> <li>• Remove sources of distraction.</li> <li>• Prepare the space to cushion possible bumps and falls to prevent risks.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Adaptations or modifications to the methodology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place speakers on the floor to facilitate the transmission of vibrations in case of pupils with hearing problems.</li> <li>• Use verbal, physical, visual, or auditory support.</li> <li>• Provide concise and brief explanations.</li> <li>• Use imitation and attempt to later explain the task or game rules.</li> <li>• Allow the child to touch the instructor to internalise a position, body part, movement, etc., in the case of visual impairment.</li> <li>• Use words of encouragement to reinforce success.</li> <li>• Position the child in the ideal starting position for the movement.</li> <li>• Apply resistance force to help them internalise the movement tone.</li> <li>• Guide them by hand through the space.</li> <li>• Allow them to walk or roll instead of running.</li> <li>• Use sign language. If there is a mediator from the Spanish National Organization of the Blind (ONCE; in many schools where children with hearing impairment are enrolled, a mediator is assigned), utilise them to learn basic words related to colours, materials, rules, and routines, and speak in both verbal and sign language simultaneously, allowing everyone to learn simple terms in that language (there are reliable translators available for support such as <i>Spreadthesign</i> or <i>Sématoss</i>).</li> <li>• Try to translate the same words into the language of foreign pupils who do not speak Spanish (online translators can always be used).</li> </ul> |
| Adaptations or modifications to the task        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include examples in the basic rules of the games.</li> <li>• Reduce the length of playtime.</li> <li>• Increase or decrease the number of players depending on the space.</li> <li>• Reduce distances in movements or throws.</li> <li>• Place different heights on foam modules when performing a downward vertical jump, allowing each pupil to choose the one they prefer.</li> <li>• In balance tasks, use 'paths' of different widths and let them freely choose which to use.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

### Practical suggestions

The following activities are detailed tasks for achieving the skills, competencies, and objectives related to the major curriculum areas outlined in early childhood education.

For each of these tasks, possible reinforcements or adaptations are presented for two common groups with functional diversity in schools: physical and sensory (hearing impairment, visual impairment, and if possible, deaf-blindness).

It is important to note that, in addition to the specific modifications for each task, there are general guidelines that should be followed:

- Pupils with hearing impairment (hearing loss): it will be necessary to provide explanations in sign language if possible (either through the teacher's knowledge or with the assistance of an ONCE mediator). In centres with pupils who have severe hearing loss, it is common to have support from a specialist from the ONCE Foundation or other organisations. Always reinforce explanations with gestures.

Tasks involving music should, if possible, be done in socks, on wooden or cork flooring, with the speaker on the floor to facilitate the transmission of sound vibrations.

- Pupils with visual impairment (blindness): before beginning tasks, offer them a detailed description of how the materials are organised in the classroom. Allow them to touch all the materials and guide them around the classroom to help them orient themselves and gain an idea of what their classmates perceive through sight. Additionally, if necessary, use physical contact to provide more security during movements.

It is highly recommended that support personnel (caretaker, school staff, mediators from educational foundations) be present to assist the pupil during tasks, as additional human resources are needed to attend to all pupils in a full psychomotor session.

- Pupils with deaf-blindness: adaptation will depend greatly on the degree of impairment. In general, allow them to hold onto your arm to move around, use gestures to explain activities, and let them touch you while guiding their hands to where they need to focus their attention. Tasks are generally slower for these pupils.
- Pupils with motor functional diversity: adaptation will depend on the affected area or limbs. For pupils with balance difficulties who can walk with assistance, provide support such as a ballet bar, wall bars, or walkers. Tasks that involve throwing or handling, which can be done while standing, should be performed with support against a wall to improve balance. If this is not possible, aim for them to perform tasks in a seated position. If the issue is that they cannot perform impact tasks such as running or jumping, try to ensure that their movements are always undertaken while walking or crawling.

These adaptations and practical suggestions are intended to create a more inclusive and accessible learning environment for all pupils, regardless of their functional diversity.

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### **Self-knowledge and personal autonomy (early childhood contents)**

The human body, the exploration of one's own body and the body schema:

a) the body and self-image, b) play and movement, c) activity and daily life, and d) personal care and health

---

#### **Task 1: The Dancing Monster (isolated joint mobility task)**

All the pupils form a circle. With lively music and distinct musical phrases, they move, with each musical phrase, the body parts named by the teacher following a logical order (for example, from head to toes and from the central axis of the body outward: neck, jaw, and other voluntarily contractible facial muscles, shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers, hips, knees, ankles, and toes). Once this is done, they start over, but this time cumulatively, until they end up moving the entire body as if they are dancing monsters.

Possible reinforcements or adaptations:

- Pupils with hearing impairment: place them close to the speaker (even touching it with a body part) and in front of the teacher. Each time the teacher names a new joint, it should be pointed to so that they are aware of what to do.

- Pupils with visual impairment (total or partial): name the body part and if they do not recognise it, touch it so they can memorise it.
- Pupils with deaf-blindness: place the pupil next to the speaker and allow them to touch the teacher, who should exaggerate the movements to encourage imitation on the pupil's part.
- Pupils with motor disabilities: depending on their level of difficulty, allow them to find a comfortable position. Emphasise the movements they can perform and make them aware of movements that may be harmful (it is crucial for all pupils to know their capabilities and limitations and accept them).

**Task 2: 'Twister' with adapted materials (developing balance, spatial orientation, and the body schema)**

The commercial game 'Twister' consists of a rectangular plastic sheet with four rows of circles in four different colors and a spinner indicating body parts (right or left hand or foot) and colours (blue, green, red, and yellow). The goal is to place the body part indicated by the spinner on a circle of the corresponding color.

This game is suitable for working on balance and body awareness, but depending on the age and characteristics of the pupils, it may need some modifications (including to the materials). Figure 9.4 shows an example of a mat with various variations compared to the original game produced by Hasbro: the dimensions are larger to accommodate more pupils playing at once. Instead of eliminating players, half of the group can play while the others sit and watch who makes a mistake to take their place. This promotes awareness of one's own body and that of others. The waiting time to play is short since players usually make mistakes quickly (allowing for rest).



Figure 9.4. Adapted 'Twister' with various textures and colours for pupils with deaf-blindness in physical education in early childhood education. Created by Lucia Peixoto Pino at CEIP (*Colegio de Educación Infantil y Primaria*) Quiroga Palacios (Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain).

The mat should have a non-slip surface (e.g., carpet) to promote balance and cushion falls for pupils sensitive to impacts. In the original game, there is one row of circles for each colour (green, blue, red, and yellow). A preschooler, especially one with motor difficulties, cannot reach both ends with their hands or feet at the same time. That is why it is suggested that the circles are

placed closer together, with mixed colours between every two rows of circles so that the pupils always have access to the colour indicated on the spinner.

For pupils with visual disabilities, associate colours with textures so they can feel for the texture instead of the colour. For those with hearing impairments, provide visual cues. Create hand and footprints in each of the circle colours for them.

Modifications to the task:

For a child with motor difficulties, modify the rules to allow them to touch multiple body parts instead of only four, for example.

When conducting the activity with three and four-year-olds, only instruct whether they should place their hand or foot without specifying right or left. This enables them to explore and find the best solution for balance.

For five-year-olds, you can begin working on laterality, accompanying auditory instructions with visual support using materials designed for pupils with hearing impairments, as mentioned earlier.

For pupils with deaf-blindness, a more deliberate approach is needed. First, work on associating colours with textures, and when the game starts, let them touch the texture of the circle and the body part they should use to find it.

Once pupils are familiar with the game, all of them can wear blindfolds to promote tactile discrimination and visual representation while also raising awareness about pupils with visual impairments.

Similarly, the game can be played by showing the coloured hand and footprints without speaking to promote visual discrimination and sensitivity to pupils with hearing impairments.

### Task 3: How Many Body Parts in the Hoop? (developing self-body awareness)

In the physical education classroom, randomly place the same number of hoops as there are pupils. All the pupils dance around the hoops to the rhythm of the music. When the music stops, they must put into the hoop the number of body parts the teacher calls out. For example, if the teacher shouts 'three,' they can put in three fingers, or the nose, one hand, and one foot. You will be surprised by the variety of responses you get!

Possible adaptations:

- Pupils with hearing impairment: create cards with large numbers (written in both digits and letters). If you have a pupil with deafness, provide visual instructions for all pupils instead of using verbal ones.
- Pupils with visual impairment (total or partial): indicate verbally where there is a hoop and allow them to explore it before getting inside. Give them more time to execute the motor response to the task.
- Pupils with motor disabilities: allow them to dance and position themselves as comfortably as possible to minimise the difference in execution time compared to their peers.

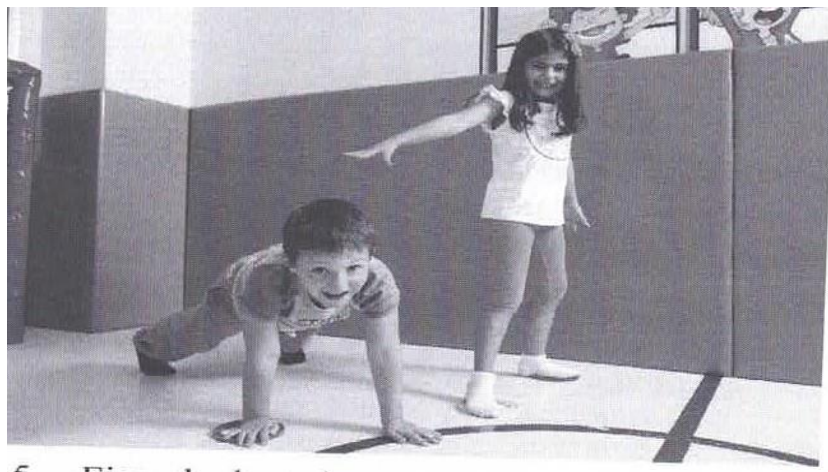


Figure 9.5. Example of various possibilities for the task of putting different body parts inside hoops.

**Task 4: Play with My Balloon (developing segmental coordination and anticipation in catching)**

Each pupil has a balloon and follows the teacher's instructions: 'Dance with your balloon without letting it go. When the music stops, throw it high and catch it before it touches the ground.'

Then repeat the action but change the colour of the balloon, aiming to develop visual discrimination as a secondary objective of the task.

Repeat the process, but this time, pupils must hit the balloon with the body parts the teacher specifies (a single finger, the nose, the head, the foot, the elbow, etc.). This activity also helps improve the body schema.

**Possible adaptations:**

- **Pupils with hearing impairment:** holding the balloon in their hand will allow them to feel the vibrations of the music through the latex (try to place them close to the speaker), helping them distinguish between the timing of throwing and free dancing.
- **Pupils with visual impairment (total or partial):** always let them play with their own balloon. Instruct them to make low throws so that they barely lose contact with the balloon. During the part that involves hitting the balloon with body parts, have them throw it with their hands, simply aiming to touch the specified body part before it falls to the ground.
- **Pupils with motor disabilities:** adapt the type of movements and body part usage to their capabilities.

#### **Task 5: The Walking Little Mice (segmental coordination, movement, and body schema)**

The pupils will become little kittens, and each one will have a small foam ball that represents a mouse. The kittens and the little mice go for a walk and must crawl while gently tapping their mouse around the room.

Repeat the activity, but this time the little mice will go with small crabs (moving in an inverted four-legged posture and tapping with their feet).

Repeat the process, but this time the little mice go dancing with snakes (tapping with their noses, foreheads, etc., while crawling).

Finally, a wicked witch has set many traps in the forest (randomly place cones and foam bridges around the room), so they must perform the same activity, but now without their little mice hitting any obstacles.

Possible adaptations:

- **Pupils with hearing impairment:** imitation will be used to explain the activity, and images of the animals in question will be used for them to enjoy and recognise the imaginative aspect of the game.
- **Pupils with visual impairment (total or partial):** allow their foam balls to touch the obstacles. Additionally, before playing the game, encourage the children to touch, explore, and become familiar with the materials placed in the physical education classroom. This will help them develop a mental image of the space. It is important that the obstacles are not hard to prevent them from getting hurt. Throughout the task, guide them verbally about any obstacles they may encounter.
- **Pupils with motor disabilities:** adapt the types of movements and adapt to their abilities.

#### **Task 6: The Frozen Statues (auditory discrimination and reaction speed task)**

All pupils dance to music, and when the music stops, they must stay still, like frozen statues.

Possible adaptations:

- **Pupils with hearing impairment:** they will perform the task close to the speaker with a balloon in their hands to perceive vibrations and recognise when the music stops.
- **Pupils with visual impairment (total or partial):** dance alongside them and remove any potential obstacles to prevent them from tripping.
- **Pupils with motor disabilities:** allow them to dance and move in the way that is most comfortable for them.

#### **Task 7: The Statues (body expression and mental representation task)**

Pupils dance freely and when the music stops they must perform a gesture that represents the object indicated by the teacher: ball, table, chair, the letter A... The same task can be performed but representing emotions (sadness, joy, surprise, etc.) instead of objects.

Possible adaptations:

- Pupils with hearing impairment: they can perform the task close to the speaker with a balloon in their hands to perceive vibrations and recognise when the music stops. Instructions will be provided visually with cards (but only for them since the goal is to develop the mental representation of the object or emotion before representing it physically). At more advanced ages, when they have acquired literacy skills, the cards will have the word instead of a drawing.
- Pupils with visual impairment (total or partial): dance alongside them and remove any potential obstacles to prevent them from tripping. When representing objects, allow them to touch the item in question to enhance the mental representation.
- Pupils with motor disabilities: allow them to dance and move in the way that is most comfortable for them.

#### **Task 8: Passing Electricity (tone and body schema development task)**

Pupils will pair up, with one lying down wearing a blindfold and the other sitting next to them. The one sitting with their eyes open will be the 'electricity' and will touch isolated body parts of their partner. When the partner feels the touches, they must tense the touched body part for a few seconds. The teacher will progressively eliminate body parts that cannot be 'electrified' anymore and accelerate the instructions to intensify reaction speed.

Possible adaptations:

- Pupils with hearing impairment: they do not require any specific adaptations.
- Pupils with visual impairments (total or partial): when a pupil with a visual impairment is present, the teacher, instead of indicating the body area on a silhouette, will do so on the body of that child when they act as 'electricity.' In this way, they will be guided through physical contact on their own body to indicate which body parts they should touch on their partner.
- Pupils with motor disabilities: help them assuming the most comfortable position.

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### **Knowledge of the environment**

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#### **Task 9: Watch out, it's hot!**

Randomly place materials in the play area (preferably on mats to prevent injuries from falls). The materials may include, for example, gymnastic benches, small rope stilts, foam pieces (such as modules, ramps, bridges, and hobby horses) as well as ropes and bricks. The pupils must move around the space without stepping on the mats because they are hot! To do this, they must visualise the materials within their reach and create pathways (moving the materials as they wish) on which to move (they can use the type of movement they consider most appropriate and combine different ones as they prefer). This task will improve balance, in addition to the development and exploration of different types of movements, as well as the ability to manipulate materials and understand the play space.

- Pupils with hearing impairment: attempt to provide explanations using sign language, if possible (either through the teacher's knowledge or with the assistance of a mediator from an organisation like ONCE). Always reinforce explanations with gestures.

- Pupils with visual impairment (total or partial): accompany the pupil and verbally indicate the materials within their reach.
- Pupils with deaf-blindness: adaptations will depend on the type and degree of impairment. In general, guide the pupil through touch and help them create 'pathways' to make them aware of the objective.
- Pupils with motor disabilities: no adaptation is needed since the pupils can decide on the type of movement they want to perform.

**Task 10: City of Sensations (activity to raise awareness of visual functional diversity among pupils)**

Various materials are placed randomly to create obstacles in the play area, preferably on mats. All pupils are blindfolded, except for any pupils with visual functional diversity. When the music plays the children must move in a four-legged posture (to prevent violent collisions). The teacher can change the placement of the obstacles.

Possible adaptations:

- Pupils with hearing impairment: guide the explanation of the game using signs and body language before blindfolding.
- Pupils with motor disabilities: no adaptation is needed as the pupils can decide on the type of movement they want to perform.

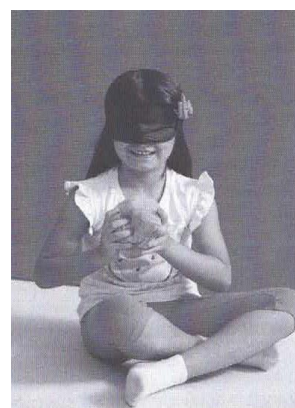


Figure 9.6. Example of a sensitisation activity aimed at visual functional diversity.

**Task 11: Help Me Find (task to raise awareness of a classmate's visual functional diversity)**

This task is carried out in the same way as the previous one, except that the pupils must find the objects named by the teacher among the materials placed on the mat. This will promote the mental representation of the indicated objects.

Pupils with visual impairment will be allowed to manipulate the objects that will be placed on the mat first. If it is material they have not used before, they will be told its name so that they can recognise it when they find it.

Possible adaptations:

- Pupils with hearing impairment: guide the explanation of the game using signs and body language before blindfolding. Before placing the material on the mat, show them a drawing so they know exactly what they are looking for. It is better to show a drawing instead of the object to enhance mental representation, which is one of the main objectives, in addition to raising awareness.
- Pupils with motor disabilities: no adaptation is needed as the pupils can decide on the type of movement they want to perform.

### Task 12: Rope Story: The Jungle

All the pupils take a rope and place it on the ground. All the ropes should be connected and represent vines tied to trees in a dangerous jungle.

The children will walk with one foot in front of the other (the tactile sensation of the foot on the rope is crucial as it encourages sensory development and balance).

Watch out, an eagle! [Everyone crouches].

The pupils continue walking, and suddenly, a snake bites one of their feet [Everyone hops on one foot on the rope].

The pupils then pass through a narrow passage [everyone walks on the rope sideways].

Afterwards, the pupils travel through a very low passage [everyone moves on the rope in a four-legged posture].

The pupils then have to remain still because a monkey is attacking [everyone scratches their whole body while balancing on one foot on the rope].

Finally, the pupils arrive home and can treat their wounds [everyone wraps the rope around different parts of their body].

The pupils are so tired that they give themselves a massage before falling asleep [self-massage with the ropes: everyone massages themselves with the rope ends].

Possible adaptations:

- Pupils with hearing impairment: accompany the story narration with visual images of what is happening (the animals and passages encountered).
- Pupils with visual impairment (total or partial): they can follow the explanation by performing the tasks while maintaining contact with the rope using the soles of their feet (they should be in socks).
- Pupils with motor disabilities: allow them to perform the movement most suitable for their abilities. If necessary, offer a hand to help them walk and carry out the tasks.

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### **Languages: communication and representation**

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### Task 13: Would You Like to Be My Guide? (task to raise awareness of sensory functional diversity)

Pupils will learn basic communication tools used by individuals with deaf-blindness (communicating through touch). The task involves one pupil representing letters or signs silently on the hand of another pupil who is blindfolded. The blindfolded child tries to guess which letter or message they received.