



SchemaPlay
A Community Interest Company

SchemaPlay™ Training

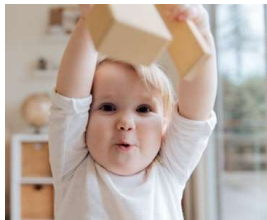
"If we think of learning as part of growth, and if we are concerned with the quality of growth and fulfilment of growth, we must define our purpose in terms which relate to these ideas and use words which relate to our thoughts. Our thoughts are always imprisoned within the words we use to express them, and we cannot solve a problem if we use the wrong language. We have a need to use the language not of building and mechanics but of biology – roots, nourishment, growth – since we are concerned not with machines but with living, growing beings. If we think in terms of how children grow roots, into what they grow roots, and how these roots can best be nourished, we must use words which express such ideas." Christian Schiller, 1979.



SchemaPlay™ training supports adults working with young children to identify their 'roots' of learning – their operational schemes and care for and nourish them.

What are schemes?

They are generally defined as repeated patterns of behaviour that are identifiable in young children's play. You may have observed a young baby delighting in repeatedly dropping objects from their highchair, or a toddler taking objects from one room in the house to another. Or perhaps you have noticed a child being fascinated by putting objects in lines, throwing objects repeatedly, or even finding great joy in filling and emptying containers, or watching objects spin? These early scheme behaviours are the foundations to



learning across the early years' curriculum. When we are aware of the different types of schemes and we seed a supportive environment for children to repeat them in a range of ways, fostering children's confidence and competencies, we can later build upon these sturdy scheme roots and the child's lines of enquiry in guided activities to nourish new learning and new schemes – opening up access to a breadth of curriculum engagement that is fostering young children to develop a joyful, confident and self-motivated approach to learning.

How important are schemes for children's outcomes?

Schemes are in use all day every day – even by adults. For example when preparing a meal, we will be drawing upon a containing scheme (putting ingredients into bowls), a rotating scheme (as we mix the ingredients together) and a trajectory scheme (as we pour the mixture say into a frying pan). We have learnt to combine schemes and, in this example, we have chunked them together in our long-term memory. We call this sophisticated operation cooking. Measuring, adding, reading and writing are all schemes combined; enabling us to engage in these more academic sophisticated operations.

Therefore identifying schemes, such as the ones pictured above, and nourishing children's thinking by giving them many ways to explore their schemes and then to build on them to support new learning and extend their lines of enquiry, is a vital component of our early years' practice; nourishing capabilities, confidence and building upon what children can do and their unique investigations to support new learning!

Observing and nourishing children's schemes to support improved learning outcomes is something that we can all do once we are familiar with what they look like. Sign up for SchemaPlay training today to nourish schemes and nurture learning in your work with young children and join other SchemaPlay pedagogues in truly following the unique child.