

What is Play-Based Learning?

Play-based learning includes experiences that engage students in opportunities to learn and practice important developmental skills through play. Important components include:

- Choice
- Exploration
- Engagement

According to the PLAY Brief provided by the New York State Education Department, play is used as an instructional strategy. The daily schedule needs to ensure that children are given opportunities to do the following:

- Engage in hands-on experiences with materials.
- Develop intrinsic skills in all the domains of learning, which include cognitive, physical-motor, communication and language, and social and emotional development.
- Think symbolically while connecting ideas, feelings, and facts to build new understanding.
- Construct their own knowledge and deepen previous knowledge through direct experiences.
- Set goals, develop and share ideas, make rules, negotiate challenges, and choose how long to play.
- Explore, create, pretend, imagine, and learn from trial and error.
- Talk, debate, and express.

21st Century Skills Supported by Intentional Play

Collaboration through team-based, project-based activities.

Emphasizing conceptual reasoning skills and background knowledge across subject areas.

Emphasizing oral and written communications meant to convey knowledge and reasoning to others.

Emphasizing activities that focus on solving unstructured problems.

