

Let's Build!

You can learn a lot about a child by observing the way that they undertake a simple task. Explore the range of developmental benefits this 'Let's Build' activity provides.

Learning aims

- Characteristics of Effective Learning
 - Encourage children's creating and critical thinking skills
 - Have and develop their own ideas
 - Make links between ideas
 - Develop strategies for doing things
- Physical Development
 - Use gross and fine motor skills
- Communication and Language
 - Use talk for thinking and communicating
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 - Work together with others; make friendships; take turns and share
- Expressive Arts and Design
 - Use imagination.



Resources

- A selection of resources in various sizes suitable for building:
 - Wooden blocks
 - Real and or plastic bricks
 - Cardboard boxes
 - Crates
 - Containers
- Tubes made of various materials
- String
- Sticky tape.

Activity outline

- Arrange a selection of the resources in a space, indoors or outdoors
- Invite a group of children to explore the resources, choose what they like to build and create something of their choosing
- Allow the children the time and freedom to explore and investigate the resources
- Observe:
 - The imagination that takes place:
 - What inventions have they come up with? Are they working together to make something or working alone?
 - How they problem solve and find ways of doing things
 - Any new ways or ideas they come up with and how they work out how to use the resources in different ways
- Scaffold their learning by encouraging them to use their thinking skills to work out problems. Ask questions such as 'how else could you do that?', 'what do you think might happen if?'
- Extend their range of skills by challenging them
- Watch as they create their own 'story'.

Babies and younger children

Young children start to show critical thinking skills from a very young age. A similar activity for babies and younger children is through treasure baskets.

- Watch how babies explore, how they pick up different objects and 'compare' them in their own way
- Observe how they learn what else they can do with the objects e.g. tipping the objects out and putting the basket on their head like a 'hat'
- See how they learn cause and effect e.g. if they bang two objects together what happens.