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exploration
/ɛksplə'reɪʃ(ə)n/ ◀

- noun
- exploration, plural noun explorations
- the action of exploring an **unfamiliar** area.
"space exploration"
synonyms: investigation, study, survey, research, search, inspection, probe, examination, enquiry, scrutiny, observation; More
 - the action of searching an area for natural **resources**.
"onshore oil and gas exploration"
synonyms: investigation, study, survey, research, search, inspection, probe, examination, enquiry, scrutiny, observation; More
 - thorough** examination of a subject.
"some changes in the care-giving situation may need exploration"
synonyms: investigation, study, survey, research, search, inspection, probe, examination, enquiry, scrutiny, observation; More



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im-ag-i-na-tion
/ɪməˈnæʃ(ə)n/

noun

the faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses.
"she'd never been blessed with a vivid imagination"
synonyms: imaginative faculty, creative power, fancy; More

- the ability of the mind to be creative or resourceful.
"technology gives workers the chance to use their imagination"
synonyms: creativity, imaginativeness, creativeness; More
- the part of the mind that imagines things.
"a girl who existed only in my imagination"

"What is now proved was only once imagined." -Walter Dill Scott

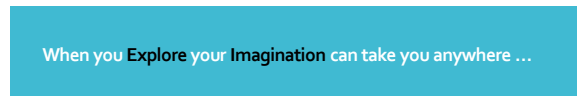


When Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone, it must have seemed like magic!

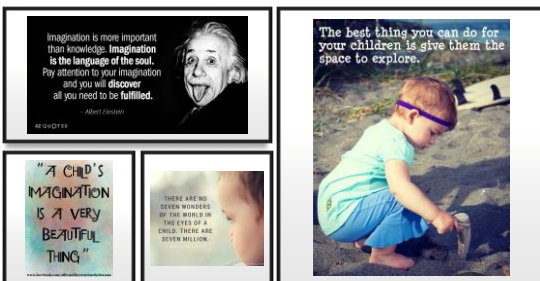
I then showed this M. (the microphone) the following sentence: "No, Graham, correct this, I want to see you." To my delight he wrote and declared that he had heard and understood what I said.

Einstein on the Imagination

- "Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere."
- "Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions."
- "The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination."



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Exploration ...

"As they play, these young explorers can be totally absorbed. Opening and shutting, filling and dumping, and picking up and dropping are endlessly fascinating activities that challenge infants' mobility and dexterity as well as their ideas about objects and what they can do."

(Copple & Bredekamp, 2009, p. 61)



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How Infants and Toddlers Learn & Explore

Infants are in the sensory motor stage of development and therefore learn by **exploring** and receiving feedback from their entire body.

As they develop control over their muscles, they are able to gradually focus their learning.



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Infants and Toddlers learn and **explore** through all of their senses by touching, smelling, hearing, seeing and tasting the items in their environment.



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They gain valuable information about their world.

This interaction with materials offers experience and knowledge upon which to build later experiences.

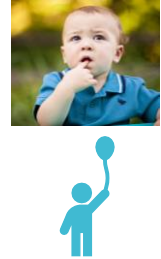


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Why should we encourage and support opportunities for Exploratory play with our children?


Exploratory Play Promotes:

- Stimulated brain connections
- Early cognitive development
- Problem-solving skills
- Good self-esteem
- Self-confidence
- Critical thinking ability, and resourcefulness




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BABIES AND TODDLERS LOVE TO PLAY WITH EVERYDAY OBJECTS AROUND THE HOME - SO DON'T WORRY YOU WON'T NEED TO SPEND LOTS OF MONEY.



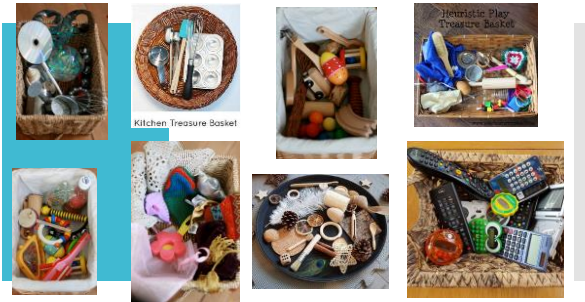
SOME IDEAS ARE.....

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Treasure Baskets and Heuristic Play

- **Treasure baskets** and **heuristic play** are very similar types of play. The main difference is that treasure baskets contain objects made with natural materials only. The items are usually provided in a low basket that babies can reach into. Natural materials provide babies with more sensory stimulation - and touch and taste are the main ways babies process information.
- They move onto **heuristic play** once they start to walk. Heuristic is defined as enabling a child to discover or learn something for themselves. It is rooted in young children's natural curiosity. And items in the basket or play area are a mixture of natural and man-made objects.

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Provide your child with a space in your home for imaginative play.

- **Imaginary Play** can take place outdoors or a separate room or even just the corner of a room.
- We need to have environments where children are able to access materials and props independently.
- Examples:
 - **Dinner tables, chairs and couches:** remove all the chairs and cover the table with sheets, it becomes an instant den or even a castle, a cave or even a tunnel that an explorer needs to investigate.
 - **Canopies and play tents** can create a great place to begin the imaginary world. The play corner or imaginative play area should be changed regularly with different props and toys to keep children stimulated by it.



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Provide Props and Toys

- Again this does not mean that you have to go out and spend a lot of money on toys to help promote imaginary play. Most simple items found in the home will act as perfect props to spark the imagination.
- Cardboard boxes** can become anything in the imaginary world. **Wooden spoons, baskets, blankets, pots and pans, old clothes, bags, shoes even a twig...**the list is endless.
- You will be surprised – your home actually is filled with props that can be re-invented into other things.



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Be your child's play partner

- Your child will love to play with you!
- When your child brings you a pretend cup of tea, play along and ask for a teaspoon of sugar or be their superhero partner.
- Ring them up on their pretend phone asking to put in an order for 2 large pizzas for delivery.
- Show an interest in what they are doing as this helps to develop the story and encourage the imagination but let your child be in charge.
- Arrange play dates with children of a similar age so they can support each other's imaginative play.



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Some More Pointers ...

- Providing safe spaces and opportunities for children to explore large muscle movement.
- Supplying materials that allow for the exploration of temperature, texture, size and shape as well as materials that can be taken apart, opened and closed, filled and dumped.
- Allowing children to clean up minor messes they may have created.
- Giving children real tools such as spoons to feed themselves or to role play with. They need the "real" feel.
- Honoring children's preferences by allowing infants/toddlers to make choices.
- Permit children to decide when an activity is complete. (ongoing projects)



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