

We Honor Children's Need for Dramatic Play, Literacy Play, Playing in Nature, Playful Teaching and Learning



"Make play and games important parts of the curriculum...Instead of getting rid of blocks and dress-up clothes, kindergarten teachers need to primarily focus on improving the quality of make-believe play..."

Excerpts from *Tools of the Mind: A Vygotskian Approach*

Literacy Play Centers Provide Reasons to Use Language



We Make Center Description Signs to Inform Parents

Literacy and Dramatic Play Center

Here children are using language and literacy skills to assume and practice roles of people in their world. Children are reading and writing for real purposes as they make grocery lists, read to teddy bears, and take orders for restaurant food.

They are developing important social-emotional skills: cooperating, communicating, observing, and playfully creating with others.

Children are engaged in interpersonal problem solving, expressing feelings and learning to get into and out of various social situations.

They are building vocabulary and making connections to new thematic studies, experiencing creative dramatics and developing important communication skills.



Our literacy play center becomes a veterinarian's office, post office, space station, grocery store, cafe, costume shop, and pizza shop.

The Dramatic Play Center Changes With the Curriculum: Parents Contribute Literacy Props



In Joanie Culter's kindergarten the dramatic play center becomes:

- **A space lab** while we're studying the stars.
- **A ten-penny store** in February while we study money. (They love the cash register!)

McKinley Vet Clinic: Open For Business

McKinley Vet Clinic

Owner's Name: Toshua

Pet's Name: CAT

Dog ☐ Cat ☐

Reason for visit:

Checkup	yes <input type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
Shots	yes <input type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
Sick	yes <input type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
Teeth cleaning	yes <input type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>

Treatment received:

Doctor's Name: _____



Cathy Jordan's philosophy is simple: "The children have got to love coming to school and have reasons to read and write!"



Young writers need real world reasons to write. English learners rehearse new language patterns through play-based learning.

Jacque Verrall's Kindergarten Literacy Play Center Becomes a Space Station: Parent Volunteers Created All of the Amazing Props



A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, kindergarten children traveled in space...



Space travelers translate messages from outer space.



Pilot and co-pilot work together to navigate between the stars...

Consider the powerful vocabulary development and opportunity to develop collaborative conversations that occur during rich themed dramatic play.



L.K.1, L.K.6, SL.K.1, SL.K.6



Block Building: Growing Future Engineers and Architects

We are:

- Counting, measuring, building, balancing
- Developing social-emotional skills: We communicate and collaborate
- Using small muscle skills
- Developing eye-hand coordination
- Learning to think like an engineer:
 - Ask and imagine
 - Plan, predict, and create
 - Read with a purpose
 - Record: write and draw
- Sharing pride in our accomplishments

Frank Lloyd Wright attributes his early interest in architecture to the blocks his mother gave him.

Research shows later algebra gains for children who engaged in block play in early childhood.



Imagination is more important than knowledge.

- Albert Einstein