

The Spectacular Suit
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 Patterns



Planning a *Conceptual PlayWorld* in STEM (Fleer, 2022)
Monash PlayLab

Five Characteristics of a Conceptual PlayWorld to support imaginary play and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) thinking and learning (Fleer, 2022)

Pedagogical characteristics	Pedagogical practices that are planned	Conceptual PlayWorld in action
Selecting a story for the <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Selecting a story that is enjoyable to children and adults. Summary of the story. ■ Building drama for the characters in the story. ■ Building empathy for the characters in the story ■ A plot that lends itself to introducing a problem situation. Overview of the problem. ■ Being clear about the concept(s) and its relation to the story and play plot to be developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This story brings forward the concept of patterns through the story of a young girl named Frankie who wants to wear something special to her birthday. ■ Children love birthday parties and it's Frankie's first birthday celebration, excitement & anticipation, family context, dream gift ■ Empathy for Frankie who is developing her sense of identity and practising voicing her ideas - she wants to be spectacular. Frankie



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adventures or journeys that spring from the plot (e.g., chapters) 	<p>has a sense of imagination and dreams big</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The problem - designing a spectacular suit with a spectacular pattern ■ Concept - pattern. Designing a spectacular suit with repeated characteristics e.g. shape or colour ■ The children are invited to Frankie's birthday party! But they'll need a suit with a spectacular pattern.
<p>Designing a <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Finding a space in the classroom/centre/outdoor area suitable for an imaginary <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> of the story ■ Designing opportunities for child-initiated play in ways that develop the play plot further or explore concepts and make them more personally meaningful ■ Planning different opportunities for children to represent their ideas and express their understandings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn any indoor/outdoor space into an imaginary design studio where you can pretend to be tailors. You might need a measuring tape, a sewing machine, thread & needle, fabrics, pen & paper ■ What inspiration do you have for your pattern? For Frankie it was space, for you it could be nature, geometry? Patterns are all around us. Can you go on a pattern hunt e.g. finding spirals, spots, stripes
<p>Entering and exiting the <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan a routine for the whole group to enter and exit the <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> of the story where all the children are in the same imaginary situation ■ Children choose characters as they enter into the imaginary situation ■ Adult is always a character in the story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To signify entering the imaginary situation together - being a team of designers. ■ Children and adults choose to be characters e.g. Frankie, textile designers and fashion designers working from a design space. You might like to visit a fabric and craft shop. Or perhaps have a design studio as a textile designer to work on your patterns. Do you have buttons, bows, animal print? Are they part of the pattern? ■ Maybe an expert artist, mathematician, or textile designer could visit to help learning about patterns and print

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Planning the play inquiry or problem scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Problem scenario is not scripted, but a general idea of the problem is planned ■ The problem scenario is dramatic and engaging ■ The problem invites children to investigate solutions to help the play in the <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> ■ Being clear about the concepts that will be learned from solving the problem situation. Concepts are in service of the children’s play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Receive an invitation - the family needs the children's help. They want to make Frankie’s party even more spectacular ... “Please come to Frankie’s surprise birthday party. Can you make your own spectacular outfit to surprise Fankie for her birthday? Hers looks like a stormy sky. What will yours look like?” ■ Concept - a pattern has repeated characteristics e.g. shape or colour ■ While in the imaginary design studio, children can pretend to textile designers to create a spectacular pattern for their suit. Frankie’s has “stars, lightning bolts and shapes.” Does yours have flowers, love hearts, animals, boats, cars etc? Use your imagination to come up with patterns you want to design. Frankie will be excited to see your spectral suit.
Planning adult interactions to build conceptual learning in role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adults are not always the same character. Roles are not scripted ■ Planning of who will have more knowledge and who will be present with the children to model solving the problem. There are different roles adults can take: Adults plan their role for the <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> to be equally present with the children, or to model practices in role, or to be needing help from the children. Their role can also be be together with the child leading (primordial we), where they literally cradle the child or hold their hand and together act out the role or solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are different roles adults can take: Adults plan their role for the PlayWorld to be equally present with the children (e.g. “Let’s explore patterns together. What patterns can we find in nature?”), or to model practises in role (e.g. I’m pretending to be a textile design expert. I make patterns... look at this one the sequence of these three shapes is repeated in my fabric for the suit), or to be needing help from the children (e.g. “Tell me what about your pattern design for the Spectacular Suit?”). Their role can also be as together with the child leading (primordial we) (e.g. “Let’s pretend to be Frankie together. Surprise!”) where they literally cradle the child

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		<p>or hold their hand and together act out the role or solution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conceptual intentions are planned: Planning of who will have more knowledge and who will be present with the children to model solving the problem

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Conceptual PlayWorlds: Monash University Working Papers:

<https://www.monash.edu/education/research/projects/conceptual-playlab/publications>