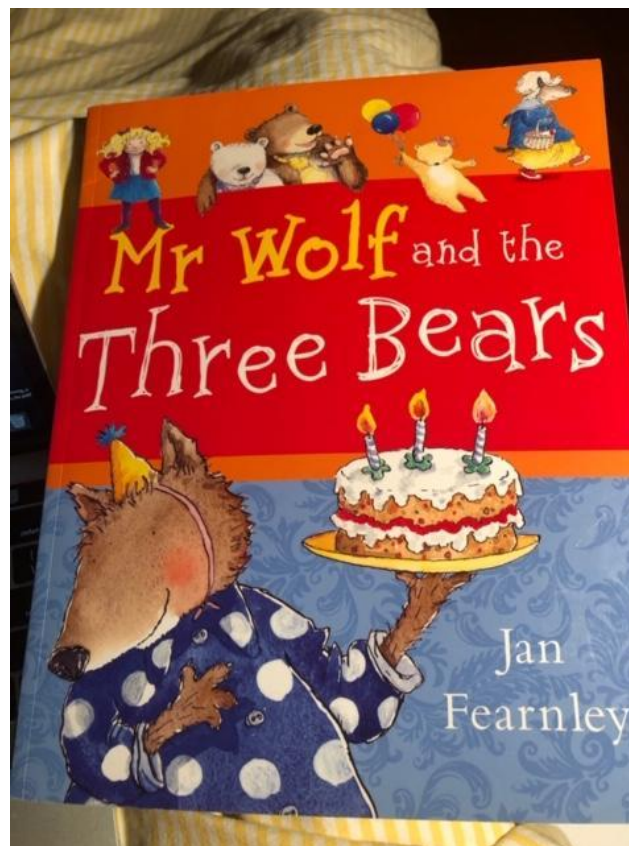


**Mr Wolf and the Three Bears**  
Jan Fearnley



**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
<p>Selecting a story for the <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i></p> <p><i>* Even though the main character in this book is depicted as male the storyline can be repositioned to encourage more gender inclusion of girls (referring to "the wolf" and "she/her" when reading the story.)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Selecting a story that is enjoyable to children and adults. Summary of the story.</li> <li>■ Building drama for the characters in the story.</li> <li>■ Building empathy for the characters in the story.</li> <li>■ A plot that lends itself to introducing a problem situation. Overview of the problem.</li> <li>■ Being clear about the concept(s) and its relation to the story and play plot to be developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Wolf invites her* friends the three bears round for tea to celebrate baby bear's birthday and spends the day preparing afternoon tea with Grandma Wolf.</li> <li>■ Drama is introduced through inviting the three bears to tea and built through children's familiarity with the fairy tale of the Three Bears and anticipating what might happen next.</li> <li>■ This story positions the wolf as a likeable character.</li> </ul>



Pedagogical characteristics	Pedagogical practices that are planned	Conceptual PlayWorld in action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adventures or journeys that spring from the plot (e.g., chapters).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problem situation: How to prepare afternoon tea suitable for the wolf and the three bears.</li> <li>STEM concept: Design and technologies; food specialisations (designing and preparing suitable food).</li> <li>Adventures can be role played and developed from the original plot: (e.g. Researching and going shopping to buy suitable ingredients for the afternoon tea).</li> </ul>
<p>Designing a <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding a space in the classroom/centre/outdoor area suitable for an imaginary <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> of the story.</li> <li>Designing opportunities for child-initiated play in ways that develop the play plot further or explore concepts and make them more personally meaningful.</li> <li>Planning different opportunities for children to represent their ideas and express their understandings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> space can be created to represent the Wolf's kitchen.</li> <li>Have soft toys of the Wolf and the three bears in the story with a range of props – calendar, picnic plates, cooking utensils.</li> <li>Create opportunities for children to plan, design and represent recipes for the party food.</li> </ul>
<p>Entering and exiting the <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>Children choose characters as they enter into the imaginary situation.</li> <li>Adult is always a character in the story.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enter the imaginary space, the whole group visits the Wolf's home/kitchen to prepare afternoon tea.</li> <li>Children can choose to be one of the three bears, the Wolf, Goldilocks, Grandma Wolf, or another character they invent.</li> <li>Adults can be any of the characters, e.g. Baby Bear.</li> </ul>
<p>Planning the play inquiry or problem scenario</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problem scenario is not scripted, but a general idea of the problem is planned.</li> <li>The problem scenario is dramatic and engaging.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult (in role) asks the children how they can prepare afternoon tea suitable for the Wolf and the three bears.</li> </ul>

Pedagogical characteristics	Pedagogical practices that are planned	Conceptual PlayWorld in action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The problem invites children to investigate solutions to help the play in the <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i>.</li> <li>■ Being clear about the concepts that will be learned from solving the problem situation. Concepts are in service of the children’s play.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Problem scenario: Oh dear, the Wolf doesn’t know how to prepare afternoon tea.</li> <li>■ After acting out the story, children may decide to help the wolf to prepare afternoon tea; research and design new afternoon tea recipes.</li> <li>■ STEM concept: Design and technologies; designing and preparing suitable food; making informed selection and preparation choices.</li> </ul>
Planning adult interactions to build conceptual learning in role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Adults are not always the same character. Roles are not scripted.</li> <li>■ 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 <b>equally present</b> with the children, or to <b>model practices</b> in role, or to be <b>needing help</b> from the children. Their role can also be <b>together with</b> the child leading (primordial we), where they literally cradle the child or hold their hand and together act out the role or solution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ There are different roles adults can take: Adults plan their role for the <i>Conceptual PlayWorld</i> to be equally present with the children (<b>e.g. “Let’s make a menu for afternoon tea. What do we need to know?”</b>), or to model practices in role (<b>e.g. “I’m writing down all the ingredients to make a recipe”</b>), or to be needing help from the children (<b>e.g. as Mr. Wolf “Oh dear, I don’t know what bears eat. I might make the wrong thing and give the bears a tummy ache. What can I do?”</b>). Their role can also 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 (<b>e.g. “Let’s all be baby bear and get ready for the party. I wonder what Mr. Wolf will give us to eat”</b>).</li> <li>■ Conceptual intentions are planned: Planning of who will have more knowledge and who will be present with the children to model solving the problem</li> </ul>

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