

Abstract

Play is often underestimated in its importance in the skills and lessons learned while engaged in play. It is considered a child's activity whose purpose is solely to help children dispose of copious amounts of energy and excitement. Although play is good for such purposes, for preschool age children, play also holds a much greater purpose, more specifically the engagement in dramatic play.

Dramatic play is the type of play in which students participate in pretend play, taking on the roles and interactions of those they observe in their environment. During dramatic play, children interact with their peers, learning how to appropriately interrelate and engage in various environments and situations. It is through this type of play children learn how to have successful social interactions, setting them up for achievement both in the classroom and out.

This action research analyzes how four preschool age children interact and behave during dramatic play time set aside within their classroom. More importantly, the action research analyzes the effect dramatic play has on the social and emotional development of preschool age children. The researcher instituted various dramatic play themes, props, materials, and scenes while observing how the four students responded to the materials available and interacted with their peers.

The researcher drew from her studies of the Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers textbook, literature research, her colleagues and experience within the preschool setting to accurately record observations and obtains data in regard to this research project. The results of the research help to further understand the role of dramatic play on the social and emotional development of preschool students.