

LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN KINDERGARTEN

Through

TEACHER-FACILITATED PLAY

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Introduction


Teacher-facilitation of play is proposed as an effective method for supporting early literacy, however, educators remain uncertain how to balance child-autonomy in play while also directing play toward explicit academic objectives.




This study sought to understand how kindergarten teachers can successfully facilitate play to support early literacy development.

Methods

31 Kindergarten Teachers


Classroom Observations

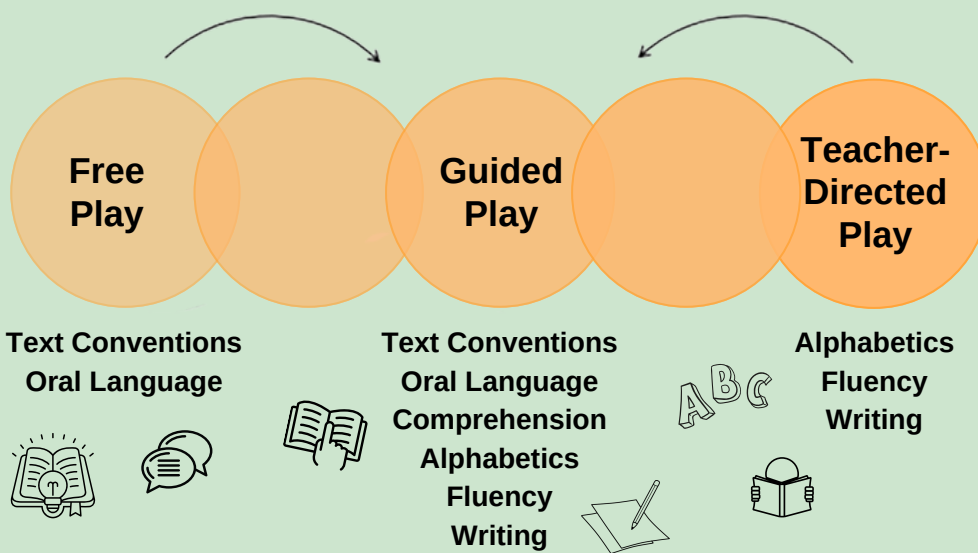

Semi-structured Interviews

Facilitating play to support literacy development



Located in Ontario, Canada

Integrating Core Literacy Skills in Play



Results showed that teachers facilitated free, guided, and teacher-directed play to support a range of early literacy skills.

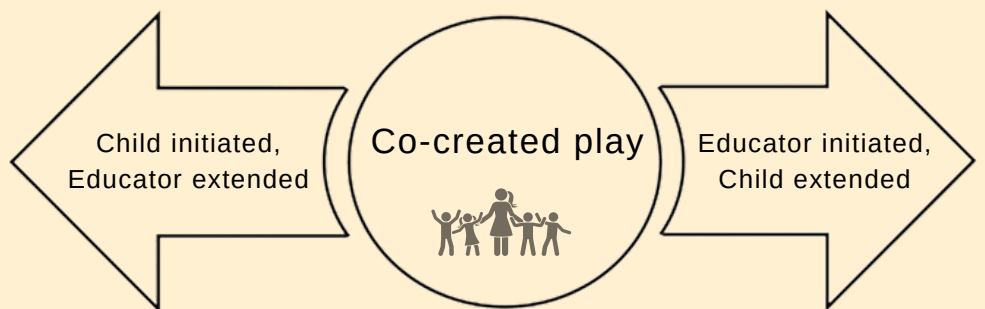
Each offered unique, meaningful contributions to literacy learning.

Educators are beginning to transition both free and teacher-directed play toward guided play, as a method of balancing child-autonomy and teacher-facilitation of literacy learning. A multitude of core literacy skills were observed within guided play.

Results

Findings begin to demonstrate how guided play can exist along a continuum, ranging in level of child-autonomy and adult-facilitation.

Continuum of Guided Play



Conclusion

This study advocates for the inclusion of both **free play and teacher-directed play to support children's literacy development.**

These play contexts serve different purposes, including the opportunity to practice learned skills and to systematically introduce new skills that are targeted to individual student needs.

We argue for **expanding guided play opportunities** as a context for integrating and applying a multitude of core literacy skills and for expanding the construct of guided play to conceptualize it as a continuum.