

Playful Thinking in Action: Tools for Cultivating Children's Thinking

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The importance of play for children's development is widely recognised. Nevertheless, the quality of play in early years classrooms can be problematic, often lacking in richness, challenge and adventure, with teachers not being clear what their role in play should be – if any.

This interactive workshop will explore a set of 'tools' that focuses on how early years teachers can advance "thinking challenges" through play while at the same time maintaining children's interest and curiosity. Practical examples of these tools, e.g., using thinking vocabulary, engaging in dialogic exchanges, and using thinking organisers playfully, will be illustrated, and their theoretical origins explained. The focus will be on cultivating thinking more explicitly through the disposition of *playfulness* rather than through the activity of play itself.