




Pedagogical Prompts for

LEARNING THROUGH EXPLORATION,
PLAY AND INQUIRY



Invitation to Engage

Dear Reader,

We invite you to critically think about pedagogy using the six pedagogical approaches provided in [How Does Learning Happen?](#)

As you move through the document, feel free to engage with it on your own terms. Jump to pages that speak to you by clicking on the flower icons or underlined text.

Don't be scared to stand still and sit with a quote, question, or concept, and remember that learning can be non-linear.



The term “pedagogy” may be unfamiliar to some in early years settings. Thinking about pedagogy provides a new way for educators to consider their work. It helps educators to:

- Look more carefully at **what** they do each and every day;
- Think about the **why** of their practice;
- Understand more deeply **how** their actions have an impact on children and their families.



Excerpt from [How Does Learning Happen?](#)

You may also keep a journal to record your thoughts all in one place; this will help you return to your reflections and see your learning process and progress. If you prefer an online journal, here are some options:

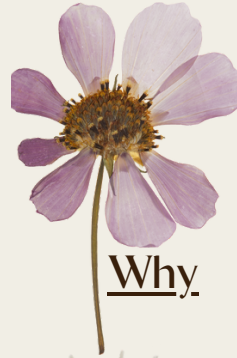
- [Penzu](#)
- [Journey Cloud](#)
- [My Journalate](#)

Pedagogical Prompts

What



Why




How



Extend



“ All of us experience a unique and important period in our lives that we call childhood when we have an innate urge to understand the world, ourselves, and others. Our brains are ready and set to solve and understand the new problems and relationships and qualities that we encounter in our experience. For that reason, what we describe as True Play—**play that is self-determined in an environment of love**—is actually the deepest and most natural form of learning. Nothing could be more important to the lives of children than the joy, freedom, and growth that characterizes this kind of play.”



Ms. Cheng Xueqin,
[AnjiPlay](#)



““ The seeds of curiosity lie in exploring. Right from birth, infants and young children choose to look at, listen to or play with things they have never experienced before. This novelty preference is a sign of robust development and health, and is an efficient way for immature cognitive systems to process information; it first helps babies survive by making sure that they pay attention to anything in our environment that can help or harm them (Lloyd, et al., 2019). It then develops into the insatiable urge to explore and experience new things. ””



You can access the full article, "**Neuroscience of Curiosity**" by purchasing it [here](#)



Teacher scripts get in the way (of cultivating a culture of inquiry). Scripts instruct us to plan learning activities linked to outcomes. They orient us towards getting children ready for the culture of school by coaching them to stand in line when there's somewhere to go and to raise our hands when they have something to say. Teacher scripts tell us to prioritize health and safety and keep us busy sanitizing tables and toys, in between admonishing children to walk instead of run, to build block towers only as tall as their knees and to stay off the monkey bars.



Teaching to Thinking



Click the flower for some reflective questions!

What scripts do you use?

Why do we hold on to these scripts?



How might these scripts affect our relationships with children and families?

How do these scripts hinder exploration and inquiry?

What is the value in flipping the script?



We invite you to extend your learning by engaging with the following article



An Emerging Pedagogy:
Have you heard of Project-Based Learning?

"Young children's natural curiosity lends itself well to Project-Based Learning - and with the right supports, these projects can be extremely effective."



- Anji Education, Inc. (2022). *AnjiPlay*. <http://www.anjiplay.com/#new-page>
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2014). How Does Learning Happen. <https://files.ontario.ca/edu-how-does-learning-happen-en-2021-03-23.pdf>
- Ostroff, L. (2020). *The Cognitive Science and Neuroscience of Young Children's Curiosity*. Exchange Review. (May/June 2020). 22-26.
- Pelo, A. (2019). *From Teaching to Thinking: A Pedagogy for Reimagining out work*. (pp. 55). Lincoln, NE: Exchange Press.
- Preisinger, R. (2022). *Bringing Project-Based Learning to Preschool*. Edutopia. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/bringing-project-based-learning-preschool/>