



Series 2. Episode 6  
Turning *Little Stones* show notes.  
With our guest Lynnette Brock from  
SchemaPlay

Episode 6  
**A fresh look at play -  
SchemaPlay**

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### *Introducing Lynnette*

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Lynnette Brock began her journey training and working in nurseries across London. Wanting to better support children, she accessed further training which gave her a fresh understanding and appreciation for what she saw children spontaneously doing.

Continuing to study to degree level and Early Years Teacher Status. She explains,

“I got a bit of a bug for it... because what I was learning was making a difference for the children”.

Her studies introduced her to Prof. John Siraj-Blatchford. Together they have collaborated and researched,

*how do we support students to grasp how learning through play works... how to give children challenges that are within their capabilities and reach so that they always feel in control?.”*

SchemaPlay emerged from this research.

#### **Research-based**

Lynnette helps to demystify ‘research’, explaining that carers of young children are engaged in ‘Action Research’ all day, every day. Our role involves watching children, asking how we can support them, really wanting to know who they are, what they need, what gives them the most joy.... We want to respond by supporting their learning and development.

Lynnette explains,

“At SchemaPlay we support practitioners to trust in the child... so that the child pulls the curriculum along rather than the curriculum being a bit of a tick list pulling the child along”.

SchemaPlay trains practitioners and others to notice and value what their children are doing. It is a positive approach, where practitioners begin to

“buzz with it and support each other”.

#### *See me!*

We can best see children’s fascinations when they are very young.

For example, babies have been picked up, laid down, cuddled etc from birth. Their fascination for motion, especially ‘up & down’ ‘in & out’ is something that we might notice. They may point to something higher, saying “up”, drop things, empty & fill things. By noticing their behaviours, we can provide opportunities for them to extend these actions at home and in settings.

#### **Possibilities**

Offering children opportunities to do what they can do across different areas opens many possibilities. For example, up & down movements can be available in the art area (paint roller, marble painting), block play (towers and ramps). As they play in ways that connect with their scheme, children will also be exploring concepts, such as gravity, momentum, momentum, force in their play,.



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Lynnette explains,

“We can tap into the scheme to open up a breadth of exploration and also to see how it’s being applied”

Children who empty and fill things (containment scheme) are investigating and exploring concepts, such as capacity, volume etc.

### Repetitive Play Patterns

Children are prompted by their inner drive to do something repeatedly. As they do, they are finding out about the world about them. Instead of stopping them or re-directing their behaviour, we can expand it, offer *more* opportunities to explore and problem solve in ways that are meaningful for them.

Children are likely to attach words to their ‘scheme anchor’. Carers can extend and develop this into literacy through stories and rhymes in ways that are meaningful for them.

### Merging and evolving schemes

Lynnette explains that all learning is emergent.

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*If a child sees a good reason for doing something, they will want to do that.*

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As they see others moving things, they will want to move things. As they begin to move around, children with a containment (filling and emptying) scheme will want to put things in a container and move them somewhere else. The emerging scheme is a **transportation** scheme.

The **positioning** scheme often emerges from those with a trajectory scheme (up and down; forwards & back). Children with a positioning scheme typically place objects deliberately in very particular places.

Again, these are linked to more sophisticated learning and play, including sequencing, grading, shape, space, capacity, hand/eye co-ordination, colour matching, etc.

### Collaboration between carers

Often repetitive play patterns can be frustrating for carers. By sharing what we notice, parents and carers can re-interpret the behaviours positively and find opportunities to extend their children’s schemaplay. Lynnette gives two lovely examples of how practitioners and parents can learn together to support children and make a huge difference in what we can offer children across settings.

### And finally...

Turning Little Stones highly recommends you visit [www.schemaplay.com](http://www.schemaplay.com) for details of upcoming training, resources and workshops (including one in Chelmsford, Essex in March 2024). She also runs a virtual family ‘coffee club’

Books by Lynnette include:

*The SchemaPlay Activity Ideas Book*



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*SchemaPlay in the Early Years, SchemaPlay Publications, Leiston*

*Seven Steps to Supporting Schematic Role Play, Teach Early Years*

*An Emergent Curriculum, Teach Early Years*

*Putting the Schema back into Schema Theory and Practice: An Introduction to SchemaPlay,  
SchemaPlay Publications*

*Further information, practical guidance and advice are available through,*

***Turning Little Stones &***

***Delving a little Deeper (Set 1 Getting to Know You) &***

***Set 2 (See Me!) – out soon***

*See website for details.*