

More Ways to Play

Ideas for adapting Kernels for your classroom



Characteristics of Learning through Play

Learning through play happens when the activity:

1. is experienced as **joyful**,
2. helps children find **meaning** in what they are doing or learning,
3. involves **active**, engaged, minds-on thinking,
4. as well as **iterative** thinking (experimentation, hypothesis testing, etc.), and
5. includes **social interaction**.

Reference: LEGO Foundation. (2017). *What we mean by learning through play*. (Version 1.2). LEGO Foundation. https://ugc.futurelearn.com/uploads/files/f9/a3/f9a3ac5c-f017-2014cd2-816a-573b100e6fd5/What_we_mean_by_learning_through_play_leaflet.pdf

Adapting Kernels to Boost Playfulness

There are many ways to boost the playfulness of Kernels. You can:

- increase the difficulty level and add complexity to keep students engaged,
- group students in new ways to increase social interaction,
- explore different types of expression to promote iterative thinking,
- connect to students' interests and identities to enhance joy,
- increase choice to make Kernels more meaningful and relevant to students.

As you find more ways to play Kernels, some activities may become too challenging for students. If this happens, go back to the basics and focus on each of the three steps written on the Kernels card. The following pages offer suggestions for more ways to play Kernels that incorporate the characteristics of learning through play.

Add Complexity

Try this with Hocus Pocus!

Play the same Kernel in many ways to keep students engaged and challenged – when students are ready, switch things up.

- Add complexity to make practicing the target skill more challenging (e.g., instead of one piece of information, students must remember multiple pieces of information)
- Adapt the content of the Kernel to align with academic goals (e.g., identifying numbers or sounds)
- Use adaptations to introduce a new way to play

Group Students in New Ways

Try this with The Last Word!

Adjust group sizes and ways of forming groups so that students experience the Kernel differently.

- Invite all students to contribute their own work to meet a group goal (e.g., each student adds a drawing to a group mural)
- Use Kernels in pairs or small groups
- Rotate through small groups or pairs while playing different rounds of Kernels

Explore Different Types of Expression

Try this with Thankful Thoughts!

Kernels don't need to look the same for every student in every classroom – diversify ways of participating and responding.

- Give students different options to practice a Kernel or express themselves, including anonymously, when appropriate (e.g., role-playing, writing, singing, dancing, building, drawing, moving, etc.)
- Allow students to share reflections about Kernels in different ways (e.g., guessing game, non-verbal forms of expression)
- Students can choose the type of expression and reflection

- Explicitly teach and model the target skills before beginning the Kernel
- Lead a debrief with students to reflect on when and how they use the skills
- Use Teacher Supports to strengthen facilitation and deepen students' understanding of the skills

- Gather feedback from students about the Kernels they like to play
- Let students choose which Kernels to play
- Let students lead parts (or the entire) Kernel
- Let students choose the materials they use while playing Kernels
- Let students create adaptation for Kernels

- Use songs, dance moves, stories and characters from media and culture in Kernels play
- Choose topics of interests to students to play the Kernel (e.g. Creating a comic)
- Group students based on hobbies or interests
- Reinvent games, songs, and stories used in Kernels (e.g., a dinosaur story instead of sports story)



When a Kernel is too difficult or overwhelming for students, return to the basics so students have more practice.

Go Back to Basics
Try this with I-Message!

Allow students to make meaningful decisions.

Increase Student Choice
Try this with Four Corners!

Weave your students' interests and identities into Kernels – you might learn something new about your class along the way.

Connect to Students' Interests & Identities
Try this with Categories!