

# ELEMENTS OF PLAY

1. ***Process Orientation (Pleasurable)***: During “play” the child’s attention & interest is focused on the process of play rather than on the product or outcome of the play. What matters in the *act of play* (the activity), not the outcome or product! It is children following their interest. They are so involved in their play that their goal can shift/ change and children will follow their interests and not even be aware of the change.
2. ***Intrinsic Motivation***: Children instigate or sustain the play purely for the pleasure of the activity brings to them and NOT for any external praise, acknowledgment or reward. Play that is intrinsically motivated lasts longer because children are interested and invested in it. They own it and take control it, therefore it is self-satisfying and inherently rewarding.
3. ***Nonliteral Qualities***: This encompasses symbolic, representative, and make believe play. Children suspend reality and act as if what is happening in the minds of the players is happening in reality. This can include situations, roles, and materials, etc.,
4. ***Experimentation with Rules***: play is often simultaneously rule-bound and rule-free.
5. ***Mental Activity (Actively Engaged)***: The child must be physically, psychologically, or cognitively engaged (or all three) rather than passive or indifferent to what is going on, or following through in a rote manner.
6. ***Freely Chosen***: if an activity is assigned or even gently pressured, it may be regarded as an assignment or work, yet if the same activity is chosen by the child it is considered play.