

Heuristic Play (12 months+)

'Heuristic' comes from the Greek work 'Eurisko' which means 'to discover'

You will need:

- A variety of 'loose parts' (fir cones, seashells, wooden curtain rings, prosecco corks, different sized jar lids, wooden items such as spoons, pastry brush, dolly pegs, bangles)
- Cardboard tube
- Empty plastic bottles
- A range of 'receptacles' eg:
 - Empty biscuit tins
 - Empty shoe boxes
 - Empty coffee tins
 - Empty chocolate boxes

The Activity:

- Clear a large space somewhere, where your child is safe. A carpeted area is best. Set out the resources in an exciting way that will encourage your little ones natural impulse to play and discover.
- Observe how your child plays and interacts, if your little one invites you to play, by offering you items, then join in too!
- Your little one will decide how to play with the resources as there is no right or wrong way to do this. They can fill and empty the containers, post items, transport from one place to another, shake, bang, manipulate, smell, problem-solve, estimate, drop, hear the sounds the objects make and learn through 'hands on' experience. The learning is endless, and they can go back and use the resources in different ways and rediscover what they learned previously.
- When your child begins to lose interest, rearrange the resources to keep them engaged.

Keeping Everyone Safe

Ensure that items are cleaned regularly to reduce cross infection, as children tend to put things in their mouth.



Healthy Hearts
and Minds



Sentences to introduce during the activity to support language development

- Can you bring me the cones please?
- Can you find all of the wooden rings?
- Shall we collect all the lids together?
- Can you put the wooden spoons inside the box?

How this supports your child's learning:

Your child will develop fine and large motor skills by exploring and manipulating the different items.

They will develop their concentration and persistence. They will develop their hand to eye coordination and problem-solving skills.

The open-ended resources will support all the senses, so they will be hearing how the items sound as they drop and bang them together, feel the different textures and smell the natural resources.

They will learn about spacial awareness, volume, capacity and categorising (sorting).

If your little one plays with older siblings, it will encourage sharing and turn-taking.

TOP TIP:

The learning opportunities are endless! Allow for independent exploration.



Extending the activity:

- Keep the interest maintained by adding additional interesting loose parts items.
- If possible, add multiples of the same resources so that your child has an abundance to choose from.
- Don't be tempted to intervene unless your little one invites you into their play.
- Observe how your child interacts with the objects.

