

EPISODE 3: DRAMA OUTDOORS, IMAGINATION AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION WITH HAZEL DARWIN-CLEMENTS

"Imagination is a core skill - whatever you do, you need to imagine it first."

For the third episode of our podcast, we were joined by theatre-maker and puppeteer Hazel Darwin-Clements who spoke about drama and imaginative play inspired by the outdoors, the importance of imagination and non-verbal communication. We asked "what if" and imagined a brighter future for ELC.



The videos, Wee Inspiration idea cards and podcast episode mentioned in this sheet are all available here: www.starcatchers.org.uk/episode3

CREATIVE WARM UP: BLUE SKY THINKING AND A CLEAR, SHARED VISION

"Imagine you had £1 million and a year off your day job to make your setting more creative - what would you do and what would you spend the money on?"

Take a few minutes to jot down some bullet points separately, then expand each idea by asking:

- How would that help staff and/or children to be more creative?
- What lessons could we learn from these ideas right now?

There are no right or wrong answers - blue sky thinking can be a great way of identifying common values, highlighting needs, and developing a clear, shared vision for your setting.

POLICY INTO PRACTICE: REALISING THE AMBITION

QUALITY SETTINGS HAVE RICH ADULT-CHILD INTERACTIONS

The quality of adult-child interactions is key in developing effective practice. This includes how we:

- Attune the interactions to the developmental stages of children, so that children are supported and also challenged,
- Use a range of communication and interaction strategies including describing and commenting on learning and handing over conversational control to children
- Use skillful questions to extend learning, for example, "I wonder why..." "I wonder if...", and,
- "Work together with children to solve problems, clarify concepts, develop thinking. This is known as sustained shared thinking." ("Raising the Ambition", page 82)

Watch the videos that accompany this podcast and the corresponding Wee Inspirations ideas cards: **Adventure Walks, 5 Ways with Dramatic Tension, Mini Worlds**

(www.starcatchers.org.uk/episode3)

How do these ideas help create opportunities for rich adult-child interactions?

Take a walk around the spaces you can access from your setting (getting down to child height if you can) - where are the weeds and cracks in the walls and strange marks that might spark imaginations?

Take a look at the Wee Inspirations Ideas card **"Yes, And!"** - this is a common drama improvisation game that's excellent for getting you out of the habit of saying no, and it's a great way to develop sustained shared thinking in an imaginative play context.

A RIGHTS BASED APPROACH TO EXPRESSIVE ARTS

Very young children learn about their rights primarily through relationships and experiences. How do expressive arts experiences within your setting help your wee ones realise:

- Article 12, the right to be heard
- Article 13, the right to self-expression
- Article 28, the right to education
- and Article 31, the right to play, leisure, arts and culture?

For more information, check out our [Making My Mark practitioner resource about the arts and children's rights](#).

MORE IDEAS / HOME LEARNING

Starcatchers' Wee Inspirations idea cards are designed to be shared with families to strengthen the links between creativity within settings and at home

INSPIRED BY THIS PODCAST

- **5 Ways with Dramatic Tension**
- **Adventure Walks**
- **Mini Worlds**
- **Yes, And!**

You can find these ideas, and more Wee Inspirations on the Starcatchers website: <https://www.starcatchers.org.uk/wee-inspirations/>

LISTEN AGAIN

Revisit key parts of the podcast where Heather and Hazel chat about the following ideas:

- 02:41:** Drama Outdoors
- 18:20:** The Naive Adult and Agency
- 28:40:** Imagination as a Core Skill
- 33:30:** Blue Sky Thinking and "What If?"s

MENTIONED IN THIS EPISODE

- *We're Friends, Right?*, William Corsaro
- "Space Dust" (2011) recorded at Treehouse Creche (example of naive adult role)
- *From What Is to What If: Unleashing the Power of Imagination to Create the Future We Want*, Rob Hopkins
- "Imagining Together", <https://www.starcatchers.org.uk/blogs/imagining-together>
- Edinburgh International Festival builds stages in playgrounds: <https://www.eif.co.uk/festival-guide/news-and-blogs/play-on-stages>

GET IN TOUCH!

If you'd like Starcatchers to run a live online training session with your setting, get in touch:

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All our resources are free to access, and feedback is vital for us to keep doing what we do.

Please fill in our short survey here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/>

[CreativeSkillsOnline](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/)

MINDMAP TEMPLATE

