

The importance of play

Early Stage 1-Stage 1 (K-2) Lesson Plan

Children will explore how play builds connection, creativity and communication skills with a chatterbox



What does UNICEF do?

UNICEF is the world's largest children's charity working to protect children, globally and here in Australia. We help children realise their full potential by providing access to clean water, lifesaving vaccines, quality education and health care. We ensure every child is safe and protected from harm and we're always there during times of emergency.

UNICEF and the importance of play

Play is an important part of children's learning and growth – it's how they explore their environment, practice developing skills and bond with the people around them.

Did you know play is actually a right? According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, every child has the right to rest, relax, play and take part in cultural and creative activities.

UNICEF champions the transformative power of play for children in Australia and overseas. Unfortunately, many children around the world lack access to play opportunities, particularly those affected by malnutrition or living in challenging circumstances. UNICEF works to address these challenges through initiatives like repurposing materials for play, promoting access to safe play spaces and advocating for every child to have the opportunity to play, as a fundamental right and crucial tool for learning, health and development.



Activity Overview

This lesson introduces students to the value of play in learning and wellbeing through a fun, hands-on chatterbox activity. Students will explore how play builds connection, creativity and communication skills. Younger students will use a prefilled chatterbox, while older students will create their own based on ideas from classroom discussion.

Mapped Curricula Outcomes in Appendix at the back.

Materials Needed



Digital Screen with internet connection to show video. Start clip from 13 sec mark: **Celebrating with The Wiggles: International Day of Play:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1NRTaAWTBs&list=PLzfcpK7Y8rTc1yCOWRXtGsV8FRi3wZmb&index=1> (57 Secs)

NOTE: Preview the video to ensure it's appropriate for your students.



Prepare a Chatterbox using the provided template to show class as an example. Here is a helpful instruction video on how to fold a chatterbox:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGVkJVWJ0i8&ab_channel=TedWilliams



Printed Chatterbox templates one for each student (prefilled for ES1- Year 1 / blank for S1 – Year 2)



Scissors and coloured pencils



Butcher's paper or whiteboard for brainstorming

Learning Intention

We are learning how to:

1. Understand why play is important for everyone
2. Use our ideas to explore movement, sound and imagination through play
3. Create and share a chatterbox that celebrates fun and learning

Success Criteria

I can:

- Talk about why play helps us learn and grow
- Join in and try different types of play (movement, imagination, sound)
- Use or make a chatterbox to explore playful ideas with my friends

Lesson Structure

Activity 1: What is Play and Why is it Important?

- Use video to explain that children all around the world have the right to play and that play helps us stay healthy, learn and feel included.
- Show video clip on digital screen with internet connection to whole class.
 - Start clip from 13 sec mark: Celebrating with The Wiggles: International Day of Play <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1NRTaAWTBs&list=PLzfcpK7Y8rTc1yC0WRXtGsV8FRi3wZmb&index=1> (57 Secs)
- Briefly explain children's **Right to Play** and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) links

***Did you know** that play is not just fun – it's also recognised as important by leaders around the world? Play is part of a big global agreement called the Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs. These 17 goals were created in 2015 to help make the world a better, fairer and healthier place for everyone by the year 2030.*

Play supports many of these goals, like:

Goal 3: Good Health and Wellbeing – Play helps us stay active, healthy and happy.

Goal 4: Quality Education – Through play, children learn new skills, explore ideas and grow their imagination.

Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities – Play should be for every child, no matter where they live or what their background is.

So, when you play, you're not just having fun – you're also helping to build a better world!

- Circle time discussion: Ask students to think about what they have seen and heard so far, ask the following questions.
 - *What is play?*
Possible responses
 - "Play is when we have fun!"
 - "It's when we run and laugh."
 - "Play is making up games with my friends."
 - "It's when I build things or pretend to be something."
 - "I can play by myself or with other people."
 - *How do we play?*
Possible responses
 - "We use toys or blocks."
 - "We pretend we're animals or superheroes."
 - "We sing songs or dance."
 - "I play outside by climbing or running."
 - "We play games like Duck Duck Goose."

- *What does play look like?*
Possible responses
 - "Smiling and laughing."
 - "People working together."
 - "Sometimes we're loud and sometimes we're quiet."
 - "Everyone joining in and having fun."
 - "Taking turns and being kind."
 - "Using our imagination!"
- *Can we play using paper?*
Possible responses
 - "Yes! We can fold paper into shapes."
 - "We can draw or cut things out."
 - "We can make a chatterbox!"
 - "We can make paper hats or puppets."
 - "Paper can be anything in a pretend game."

Activity 2: Play Chatterbox (Movement and Sound Focus)

- **Demonstrate the pre-prepared chatterbox** to the whole class. Model how to use it and what the prompts and instructions mean. Here is a helpful video on how to fold a chatterbox: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGVkIVWJ0i8&ab_channel=TedWilliams
1. **Pick a colour**
 - a. "Look at the colours on the outside – Red, Blue, Yellow or Green.
 - b. Choose one and spell it out as you move the chatterbox back and forth."
(e.g. B-L-U-E – open and close with each letter)
 2. **Pick a number**
 - a. "Now look inside and choose a number – 1 to 8.
 - b. Count it out as you move the chatterbox again."
(e.g. 1-2-3-4 – open and close as you count)
 3. **Pick another number and lift the flap!**
 - a. "Now choose another number and lift the flap to find your Play Prompt!"
 - b. "You might have to hop, sing, spin, or tell a friend something fun!"

Activity 3: Creation time

- Handout the appropriate template to each student (and scissors if required).
 - **Early Stage 1 – Stage 1 (K-Year 1):** Use prefilled chatterboxes to explore playful actions (e.g. jump like a kangaroo, clap a rhythm, pretend to fly)
 - **Stage 1 (Year 2):** Handout Blank Template: Students brainstorm their own ideas for playful actions, then design their own chatterboxes.
 - Discuss with the class some of their ideas for Playful Actions and place ideas on the board, see suggestions below.

Suggestions for Playful Actions:

- ***Wiggle like a worm!***
- ***Pretend to be a robot walking.***
- ***Hop on one foot five times!***
- ***Make a silly face!***
- ***Crawl like a crab across the room.***
- ***Buzz like a bee and flap your wings!***
- ***Tell a friend what makes you happy.***
- ***Balance like a flamingo for 5 seconds!***
 - Encourage peer support and creative ideas – Students can draw or write their play prompts.

Activity 4: Playtime - Share and Reflect

- In pairs or groups, students use their chatterboxes and try each other's prompts.
- Whole class reflection:
 - *"What was your favourite action?"*
 - *"How did it feel to share your ideas?"*
 - *"How does play help us connect with others?"*

Optional: Create a classroom "Play Wall" showing pictures or drawings of favourite play actions.

Assessment:

- Observation of student engagement and participation during activities
- Can students explain why play is important?
- Are students able to complete or use the chatterbox and share ideas with others?
- Anecdotal notes or photos can be collected for assessment evidence.

Follow-Up Activity:

- **Literacy Link:** Students write or draw a short story based on one of their chatterboxes play prompts
- **Music and Movement Extension:** Use body percussion and object sounds to create a class rhythm pattern
- **Global Learning Extension:** Explore how children play in different cultures (link to other traditional games unit)
- **Art Extension:** Create a poster or collage showing “What Play Looks Like Around the World”



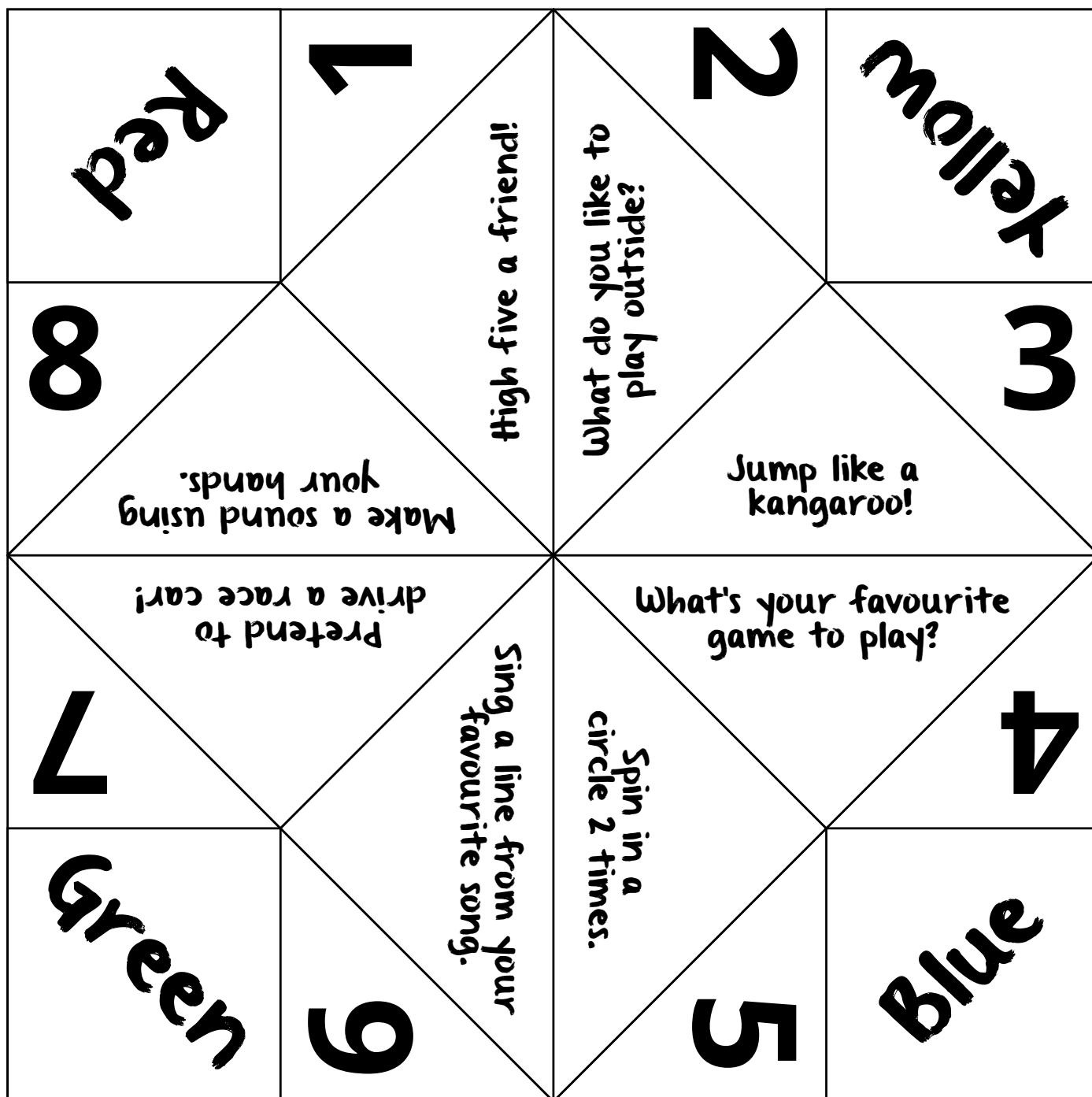
More Teacher Resources and Lesson plans
are available on UNICEF Australia's website
unicef.org.au/teacher-resources

Appendix: Alignment to Curriculum

	NSW Curriculum	Australian Curriculum Version 9
Syllabus Area:	PDHPE K-6 (2024)	Health and Physical Education (HPE)
Sub-topic:	- Identity, health and wellbeing. - Self-management and interpersonal skills. - Respectful relationships and safety	- Personal, social and community health. - Moving our bodies.
Syllabus Outcomes / Content Descriptors:	A student Early Stage 1 (ES1) PDHPE PHE-IHW-01: Identifies factors that contribute to identity, health and wellbeing. PHE-SMI-01: Identifies and demonstrates self-management and interpersonal skills. Stage 1 PDHPE PH1-IHW-01: Describes factors that contribute to identity, health and wellbeing. PH1-SMI-01: Describes and demonstrates self-management and interpersonal skills in a range of contexts.	Foundation Students Health and Physical Education (HPE) AC9HPFP02: Practice personal and social skills to interact respectfully with others. AC9HPFP03: Express and describe emotions they experience. AC9HPFM01: Practice fundamental movement skills in minor game and play situations. Years 1-2 HPE AC9HP2P02: Identify and explore skills and strategies to develop respectful relationships. AC9HP2P03: Identify how different situations influence emotional responses. AC9HP2M01: Practise fundamental movement skills and apply them in a variety of movement situations.
Links to General Capabilities:	Early Stage 1 Personal and Social Capability: Cooperation, empathy, self-awareness Critical and Creative Thinking: Making choices, reflecting on ideas Literacy: Listening and oral interaction - Intercultural Understanding: Recognising and respecting cultural games Stage 1 (Yrs 1-2) Personal and Social Capability: Teamwork, turn-taking Ethical Understanding: Respect and inclusion through play Critical and Creative Thinking: Generating ideas for own chatterbox ICT Capability (<i>optional digital extension</i>): Representing ideas digitally Personal and Social Capability: Cooperation, confidence-building Intercultural Understanding: Exploring cultural diversity through play Critical and Creative Thinking: Creative expression and play-based problem solving Literacy: Sharing and expressing ideas verbally	

Chatterbox

Once you have cut out the square shape, face the pattern/writing side down and start folding your chatterbox.



Chatterbox

- Design your chatterbox!
- Once you have cut out the square shape, face the pattern/writing side down and start folding your chatterbox.

