

6 STAGES OF PLAY DEVELOPMENT (Parten, 1923)

Unoccupied Play

Involves little interaction,
aim or language



Try: creating a sensory-rich
environment to explore

Solitary Play

Involves playing alone, usually very
focused on a toy/object/activity



Try: commenting on/narrating
what they are doing (e.g. 'Penny is
pushing the car'...'Uh oh, the tower
fell down!')

Onlooker Play

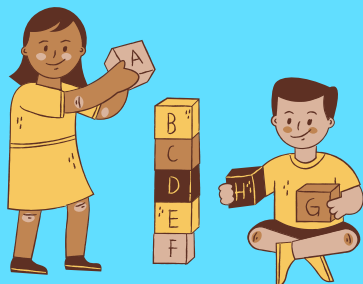
Involves watching others as
they play



Try: leading them towards the
game/activity or pointing and
drawing their attention to
particular parts of the play and
linking it to them (e.g. 'look at them
climbing, can you climb too?')

Parallel Play

Involves playing with the same
toys/activities nearby to
other children



Try: commenting on/narrating
what others are doing (e.g. 'Look!
Yusuf drew a dinosaur')

Associative Play

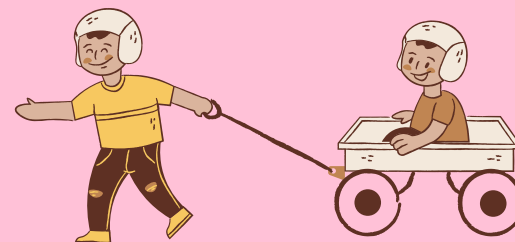
Involves interacting with
others whilst engaged in their
own activity (e.g. making
something out of playdough)



Try: inviting others into the
game/activity (e.g. 'we're making a
playdough cake...Charlie can you
make the candles? Nina, you can
make the the cake')

Cooperative Play

Involves a shared goal/game
(e.g. playing superheroes
together)



Try: developing imaginative parts
of the game (e.g. 'how could your
superhero travel really quickly?')