

## Heuristic play

### What is heuristic play?

*The term “Heuristic Play” was coined to describe the interaction of babies and children with everyday objects – not toys.”*

### Why is heuristic play good for our children?

*“Toys that do less, actually teach more.”*



### Benefits of the play

#### 1. It stimulates creativity and imagination.

Open-ended play opportunities allow children to explore, learn and develop in a completely natural way.

#### 2. It supports gross motor skills and brain development.

Children require a variety of sensory exploration to support their cognitive growth and development. With heuristic play, they are able to do this on a much wider scale.

#### 3. It stimulates multiple senses and critical thinking.

With heuristic play, children can make sounds from banging different objects together or knocking them against another surface. They learn that this action makes that sound and that sound corresponds to whatever context is on that particular page. Through these explorations they develop certain skills such as innovation and critical thinking.

#### 4. It promotes early mathematical conceptual learning.

During the heuristic play a child is exposed to a variety of items that range in size, shape, weight and texture, the time they spend exploring only aids their mathematical conceptual learning.

#### 5. It allows children to gain an understanding of the world around them and encourages independence.



A basic, everyday objects that we consider boring (or not toys) actually offer a world of possibilities to learn for our children. While they learn to play, they also start to gain an understanding of the world around them. Through handling and

exploring these objects that children begin to make their own choices and decisions and start to develop as people.

### How can I encourage heuristic play?

- ✓ provide children with more opportunities for open-ended discovery
- ✓ fill a box with heuristic objects of different sizes and textures and let the children discover them for themselves.
- ✓ allow children the freedom to choose and explore the objects without offering them the objects first
- ✓ observe but don't encourage or distract.
- ✓ 30 minutes a day is enough for the treasure basket heuristic play
- ✓ clear a space for it with no other toys around, have the TV off
- ✓ take the basket away once your child is satisfied so that they don't tire of the objects.



**Please note: Children needs to be supervised during the play at all times.**

Heuristic play opportunities can be offered at any time, such as taking your children outdoors more often or even in moments where you're doing chores, such as letting your child play with the basket of pegs as you hang up the washing.

### Resources

Heuristic play can be easily be done at home by filling a box with household objects such as egg boxes, measuring spoons, and shower puffs and sometimes outdoor objects such as leaves and pinecones. Just remember to rotate them frequently to encourage new and different learning experiences and opportunities.

