

Teaching and Learning

Characteristics of effective learning - Active learning



Active learners are involved, excited, and interested; they use and apply what they are learning, become deeply involved, and bounce back easily from difficulties. Active learning is all about the individual; it is not something that can be done to you. For children to develop into self-regulating, lifelong learners they are required to take ownership, be motivated, accept challenge and learn persistence.

The three aspects of active learning are -

Being involved and concentrating

Keep on trying

Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Task 1

Work through the bullet points below with your team. Do the statements happen in your setting, how can you make improvements?

- Provide an environment where activities excite and are on the edge of children's understanding without being overwhelming.
- Keep activities which interest the children out rather than routinely tidy them away.

- Resources should be stimulating, inventive, imaginative, varied, open-ended, freely available and related to the children's interests.
- Consider the amount of time available in sessions for children to be completely involved in their own learning.
- Encourage children to work together and learn from each other to create a 'learning community'.
- Have photographs of previous learning readily available to discuss with children.
- Use observations to note children's enjoyment and commitment and then provide similar activities.
- Plan activities which provide children with a reason to become involved

Task 2

Reflect on the adult's role. Does all of your team think about the bullet points below. Challenge each other by observing one another's practice. What evidence do you see? Note and share feedback in a professional discussion.

- Be involved in, encourage and scaffold repetitious play.
- Know if children have a specific schema and provide resources to enable and extend the child's learning.
- Extend and scaffold learning which is just outside of the child's comfort zone.
- Teach specific skills when appropriate to move learning forward.
- Encourage children to use the correct vocabulary related to activities that interest them.
- When you observe concentration, be cautious about breaching it.

- Support children to focus and calm over-stimulated children.
- Support children to become problem solvers rather than solving problems for them.
- Talk through different approaches to difficulties – don't just jump in and take over.
- Allow children to be challenged in their learning to build emotional resilience. Adults should only step in just before children become frustrated.
- Feedback should be explicit about behaviour connected to learning, such as solving problems, new ideas, concentrating, succeeding. Avoid praise or rewards just connected to an end product.
- Support parents to understand why 'delaying gratification' is important for children.
- Support parents to encourage their children to solve problems at home