THE USE OF PLAY TO ENHANCE LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG ECD LEARNERS
Introduction

- The importance of language in education.
- The language proficiency skills of South African learners and its implications in education.
- The role of ECD in improving the life chances of learners from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- The relationship between play and learning.
  - Defining play among young children
Developmental stages of play

- Sensory motor stage.
  - Birth to two years
- Representational stage.
  - Two to seven years
- Concrete operational stage.
  - Eight to twelve years
Developing children’s literacy skills

- Environments with a sufficient number of books.
- Hearing stories read to them provide them with an opportunity to appreciate books.
- Nursery rhymes, jingles and poems teach children sounds of the language as well as phonemic awareness that allow them to hear individual phonemes.
Philosophies underpinning language teaching

- Play is the basis of language learning.
- Play based activities are critical for language learning and increasing vocabulary.
- Learning must be fun with all participants enjoying.
Facilitating language development

- Read lots of stories and books to the children in order to develop their imaginative skills.
- All activities provide opportunities of language learning.
- Activities for promoting literacy skills among children include the followings:
  - Conversations
  - Story telling
  - Music
  - Dramatic play
  - Painting
  - Drawing etc.
Conclusion

- Play is the way that children make sense of the world around them.
- Both parents and teachers should play an active role in developing children’s literacy skills through scaffolding during play.
- Children learn best when they are having fun and the acquisition of new concepts and expansion of vocabulary happens through play.
- Careful planning around activities that takes place in and outside the classroom environments is essential for language learning.