META-PLAY

The Meta-Play Method

IMAGINATION

Fosters an early capacity for creativity, imagination, and abstract thinking.

Home Guide
2019-2020

Curriculum Background and Materials for Families and Caregivers

Meta-Play Implementation
Home Guide

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Meta-Play in Your Child's Classroom

This school year, your preschool child's teacher is using curriculum called Meta-Play. Meta-Play is a play-based curriculum for young children with autism and developmental delays and/or disabilities. It is designed to help them develop meta-representation (or imagination) skills, which leads to growth in pretend play and social skills.

Meta-Play has 14 total activities that are broken down into 4 lessons each. This Home Guide contains the lessons from the 12 activities most easily adapted for home-based learning.

One of the most important parts of Meta-Play is making sure that everyone on the child's educational team has access to the materials and activity information to help the child succeed – that's where you come in!

On the following pages, we will share information on 12 of the Meta-Play activities your child's teacher will be using in the classroom for you to use at home with your child.

META-PLAY
Meta-Play Background

At around one year of age, most children begin to develop the ability to meta-represent (or imagine, or "think about").

What does meta-representation look like in infants and young children?
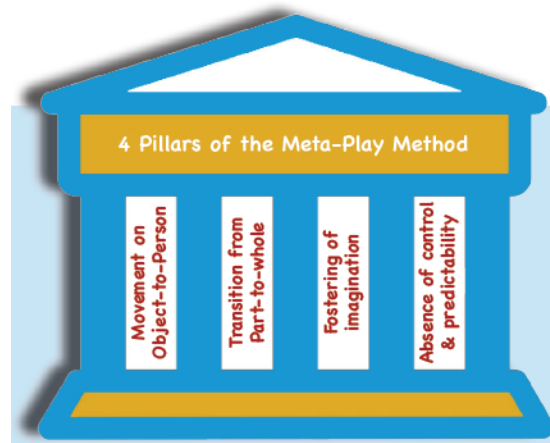1.) Looking for something is hidden, like a toy under a blanket
2.) Knowing caregivers are still around somewhere when they leave the room
3.) Thinking about how a friend might react if you knock over their blocks

What does meta-representation look like in adults?
1.) Thinking about what's in the fridge for dinner tonight
2.) Thinking about where you might have left your keys
3.) Thinking about what a friend meant by, "I have something to tell you!"

Meta-Play is based on the **Dynamic Behavior Theory of Autism**. This theory suggests that children with autism do not develop the ability to meta-represent like typically-developing children. This failure to develop the ability to meta-represent results in the symptoms and behaviors of autism.

As a result of this failure to develop meta-representation, children with autism display specific cognitive deficits. Meta-Play addresses these deficits through the Four Pillars of Meta-Play:

4 Pillars of the Meta-Play Method

- Movement on Object-to-Person
- Transition from Part-to-whole
- Fostering of imagination
- Absence of control & predictability

1.) Transitioning learners from relating to parts of objects to relating to whole objects
   Example: Rolling a toy car and making it beep instead of spinning the wheels

2.) Fostering imagination
   Example: Looking for missing toys and finding people during Hide and Seek

3.) Progressing from relating to objects to relating to people
   Example: Having human-like toys act like people (i.e., having tea with a puppet)

4.) Tolerating unpredictability and a lack of control over the environment
   Example: Playing with a bumpy ball that rolls in all different directions

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META-PLAY
Creating a Meta-World

As you read through the information on the following pages, consider this:

When we use the Meta-Play curriculum, we want to implement the lessons frequently to make sure our children get a lot of practice. However, we can also build their imagination skills by creating a "Meta-World." This means using the strategies included in the Meta-Play activities in different places, during different activities, and with different materials.

As you implement the lessons at home, consider using the strategies during different activities, using different materials, and working on them in different places.

Steps to Using Meta-Play at Home

1.) When you are playing with your child at home, gather the materials needed to implement the first lesson of an activity.

2.) Follow the procedures to implement the lesson.

3.) Prompt the child to engage in the lesson appropriately, if needed. (See below.)

4.) Once the learner is able to engage in the lesson appropriately, continue engaging in the lesson until the child moves on to another activity OR introduce the next lesson.

5.) Repeat with another Meta-Play activity, if time allows and if the learner is still engaged.

6.) Spend approximately 15 minutes (or more!) on Meta-Play activities each day. Do at least one lesson during this 15 minutes. If possible, do lessons from multiple activities.

7.) Repeating lessons and activities multiple times is both acceptable and appropriate – the goal is for these lessons to be fun, engaging play ways to gain important skills.

Supporting and Prompting Your Child

When using the Meta-Play activities, it is important to support the child's participation as much as possible and provide them with prompts when he/she needs a little extra help.

You can support your child's participation by . . .

. . . meeting them where they are at. Begin by joining your child in something they are already playing. Then, slowly introduce the Meta-Play activity.

. . . follow your child's lead. If it's been 15 minutes and they are still having fun, keep going with the same lesson! If it's only been 2 minutes and they are bored, start a new lesson and try the first one another day.

. . . be excited and engaged. Show your child that Meta-Play is fun for you, too – give extra smiles, encouraging words, high-fives, and attention when your child is participating in the lessons.

When your child needs help participating successfully during lessons, you can prompt (or help) them using these prompts in the order they are listed:

1.) **Verbal prompt** – Say something to bring your child's attention back to the lesson and what they are supposed to do (i.e., "Show me how you look for the toy!").

2.) **Gestural prompt** – Point to the materials your child should be interacting with or where your child should be looking (i.e., point to the child's cup while you take a drink, point to where you hid a toy).

3.) **Physical prompt** – Gently guide your child's hands to do the task (i.e., have them take a pretend sip from the cup, guide them to find the missing toy).

Only use prompts when needed. Children can start to depend on prompts (and be less independent!) if they receive too many.

Activities and Lessons
Activity 1: Pairing Reality with Representation
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: Let's Do This Together

Materials: Matching clear plastic cups

Lesson Objective: When an adult and the child are engaging with a pair of real objects that match exactly, the child will use the same or similar play behaviors as the adult.

Lesson Description: Show the child the matching cups and say, "Look at these two cups. They are the same!" Give the child one of the cups. Gain the child's attention and pretend to take a drink from the other cup. Encourage the child to imitate you.

Lesson 2: The Same, But Different

Materials: Toy cup and regular plastic cup

Lesson Objective: When an adult and the child are engaging with a pair of non-identical similar objects (i.e., real object and toy object) and the child has the real object, the child will use the same or similar play behaviors as the adult.

Lesson Description: Show the child the real and toy cup and say, "Look at these two cups. They are a lot alike, but they're not the same." Give the child the real cup, while you pretend to take a drink from the pretend cup. Encourage the child to imitate you.

Activity 1: Pairing Reality with Representation
Lessons 3 and 4

Lesson 3: Let's Pretend

Materials: Toy cup, clear plastic cup, cylindrical block, and small toys from around the house (i.e., car, train, small doll, etc.)

Lesson Objective: When an adult is engaging with a real or pretend object (i.e., real or toy cup) and the child is engaging with a more abstract object (i.e., wooden dowel), the child will use the same or similar play behaviors as the adult.

Lesson Description: Show the child the wooden dowel and say, "I am going to drink from this cup." Pretend to drink from the wooden dowel. Give the child the wooden down, and pick up the real or toy cup. Say, "Let's take a drink together." Encourage the child to pretend to drink using the wooden dowel.

Lesson 4: Use Your Imagination

Materials: Pretend tea set, cylindrical block, and small toys (including ones that look like people)

Lesson Objective: When an adult models pretend play behaviors with a set of toys and abstract objects and then presents the toys and objects to the child, the child will engage in pretend play (i.e., when presented with a tea set, the learner pretends to pour tea and sip it from a cup or dowel).

Lesson Description: Set up the toys like a tea party. Include stuffed animals, action figures, and/or dolls in the party. Tell the child, "We are going to have a tea party. Do you want some tea?" Engage in tea party play (i.e., pretending to pour tea, put milk and sugar in the stuffed animal's tea, eat cookies, ask a doll for more tea, etc.). Encourage the learner to engage in tea party with you and toys.

Lesson 1: Where Did It Go?

Materials: Set of 2-3 containers (clear, semi-clear, and solid), favorite small toy from around the house

Lesson Objective: After the child watches the adult hiding an object, the child will seek out and find the hidden object in a transparent box, then a partially-shaded box, and finally a fully-shaded box.

Lesson Description: Place a toy under the clear container. Ask the child, "Where is the toy?" Show the child how to find the toy. Repeat the activity with the semi-clear and then the solid container. Hide different toys to keep the child engaged.

Lesson 2: Find Me

Materials: Solid container (like a box), towel or small blanket, favorite small toys, second person if possible (adult, sibling, friend)

Lesson Objective: After the child watches the adult hiding an object under a blanket (or similar) within the child's reach, the child will find the hidden object.

Lesson Description: Using one of the child's favorite small toys, say, "Look, I'm going to hide this ____ under the blanket!" Hide the toy under the blanket and say, "Where did it go?" Show the child how to search for the toy. Repeat and have the child find the toy.

Activity 2: Fostering Imagined Existence
Lessons 3 and 4

Lesson 3: Partial Hide and Seek

Materials: Towel or small blanket, favorite small toy, second person if possible (adult, sibling, friend)

Lesson Objective: The child will find a partially-hidden familiar adult and the preferred toy that adult is hiding with him/her when the child has not watched the adult hide.

Lesson Description: Tell the child, "Look, I have this toy! I am going to hide with the toy. Count to ten and then come find me!" Help child count to 10, while you hold the favorite toy under a towel or small blanket and then hide yourself. Remain partially-visible when you hide (i.e., hide under a table without a tablecloth, hide under a large blanket in the middle of the room). Encourage the child to find you and then find the toy. (If a second person is available, you can help the child count, while the second person hides. You can then help the child search if needed.)

Lesson 4: Hide and Seek

Materials: Second person if possible (adult, sibling, friend)

Lesson Objective: Does the child seek out and find a fully-hidden familiar adult when the child has not watched the adult hide?

Lesson Description: Tell the child, "I am going to hide, and you will find me. Count to 10 while I hide!" Help child count to 10 while you are hiding, if needed. Hide somewhere where the child cannot see you. The second person should hide while you and the child count. (If a second person is available, you can help the child count, while a second person hides. You can then help the child search if needed.)

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Activity 3: Practice Unpredictable Play
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: Where's It Going Next?

Materials: Bumble ball (or another ball that does not always roll straight), bubbles, wind-up toys, or remote-controlled toys

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage with unpredictable toys and a familiar adult.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the unpredictable toys, and say, "Look! I have a ____. It's so fun!" Play with the toy and comment on its unpredictability (i.e., "Whoa, where is it going next?", "Look, the wind-up toy is about to flip!"). Give the toy to the learner and allow them to play with it. Support them in playing with it in an unpredictable way (i.e., winding up the wind-up toy, blowing / chasing bubbles, rolling the off-centered ball).

Lesson 2: Let's Move Here

Materials: A preferred toy.

Lesson Objective: The learner will tolerate unpredictable activities with a familiar adult.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the toy, and say, "Look, it's ____ - you love this toy!" Demonstrate playing with the toy in familiar ways (i.e., rock and feed a baby, roll and crash a car, etc.). Give the learner the toy and allow them to play with it. After a minute or two, interrupt their play. Use verbal directions and models to prompt the learner to play with the toy in a different way (i.e., kick a ball instead of rolling it, have a baby walk instead of feeding it).

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Activity 3: Practicing Unpredictable Play
Lessons 3 and 4

Lesson 3: Let's Walk Together

Materials: Doll, stuffed animal, large action figure, any large toy that looks like a person

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage in unpredictable activities with a familiar adult.

Lesson Description: Tell learner, "Let's walk together in a funny way! Watch me first." Hold the toy in front of you and place its feet on your feet. Walk around and make the toy "walk" with you with its feet still on your feet. Make silly facial expressions and comments to engage the learner (i.e., "The pelican is walking with me – this is so funny!").

Next, tell the learner, "It's your turn!" and have him/her place his feet on your feet. Then, walk around with the learner on your feet. Walk in patterns, like a circle or a figure-eight. Be careful to maintain safety at all times.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If this activity presents a safety risk or is against your program's safety procedures, you can replicate it by pushing or pulling the child in a car or scooter or use a seesaw or riding toy (controlling the learner going up and down / back and forth) on the playground. The goal is to control the learner's movement and for the learner to engage positively with you during the activity (i.e., smiling, laughing).

Lesson 4: Let's Fly

Materials: Doll, stuffed animal, large action figure, any large toy that looks like a person

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage in unpredictable activities with a familiar adult while a second adult engages in the activity with a toy alongside the learner.

Lesson Description: Tell learner, "We are going to pretend to be airplanes. Watch me!" Walk around pretending to be an airplane. Then say, "Now it's your turn!" Stand behind the learner, take their hands, and guide them around like an airplane. Make airplane noises, go fast (safely) and slow, and zoom your arms up and down. While pretending to be an airplane, have the second familiar adult pretend to be an airplane with a toy alongside you, and bring the learner's attention to him/her (i.e., "Look, Ms./Mr. ____ is flying like an airplane with the pelican. They're playing just like us!").

SEE IMPORTANT NOTE FROM LESSON 3.

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Activity 4: Restricting to Animal/People Play
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: Let's Play with Toys with Faces

Materials: Toys with human features (i.e., robot, vehicles with faces, etc.) and highly-preferred toys

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage with toys that have human-like features (but are not dolls or toy people).

Lesson Description: Show the learner the highly-preferred toys and say, "Look, here is a ____. You love ____!" Demonstrate playing with the highly-preferred toys and the toy car with a face (or other toy with human features) together (i.e., have the toy car give the learner's favorite doll a ride, etc.). Have the toy car engage in human behaviors (i.e., laughing, talking, giving high-fives, etc.).

Next, place all of the toys near the learner and encourage the learner to play with them. Slowly remove the preferred toys until only the toy with human features remains. Observe how the learner plays with the toy. Encourage the learner to pretend the toy is engaging in human behaviors as described above and point out the toy's human features (i.e., "Look, the car has eyes, just like you!").

Lesson 2: Let's Play with Almost-People Toys

Meta-Play Materials: Stuffed animal or animal toy, toy car with face, preferred toys

Potential Classroom Materials: Toys with human features (i.e., robot, vehicles with faces, action figures, stuffed animals, etc.)

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage with toys that have human features with less support from highly-preferred toys.

Lesson Description: Introduce the toys with human features to the learner (i.e., "Look at this animal puppet – it looks like a person!"). Demonstrate playing with the puppet and having another toy with human features imitate the puppet (i.e., have the toy car with a face imitate the puppet taking a drink or jumping). Then, place the toys near the learner and allow the learner to play with the toys. Encourage the learner to have the toys with human-like features imitate one another.

Activity 4: Restricting to Animal/People Play
Lessons 3 and 4

Lesson 3: People Puppet Play

Materials: Puppets and small toys that are people, dolls

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage with human-like dolls.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the toys and say, "Look at these toys – they look like people!" Point out people-like features (i.e., eyes, smile). Demonstrate the puppets and other toys engaging in social interactions (i.e., talking, singing, dancing). Give the learner the human-like toy they like the most (i.e., puppet, doll, etc.), and keep another for yourself.

Use your toy to initiate a social interaction with the learner's toy (i.e., have your toy say hi, share a block with the learner's toy, give the learner's toy a high-five). Continue to social interaction with the learner's toy if the learner is engaged. If the learner is not engaged, have your toy engage in parallel play with the learner's toy (i.e., play beside the learner's toy but do not force interaction).

Lesson 4: People Only Play

Materials: Puppets and small toys that are people, dolls, toy plates and silverware, pretend food

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage with human-like dolls or similar human-like toys.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the toys, and say, "Let's pretend to eat together!" Use the puppets and/or dolls to demonstrate common mealtime behaviors (i.e., have one doll give another an apple and say, "Here's your food!"). Then, have a doll or puppet give the learner pretend food.

Place pretend food and mealtime items on a table or on the floor and create a mealtime environment (i.e., use a blanket as a table cloth, set places). Give the learner their preferred human-like toy, and keep a puppet or doll for yourself. Encourage the learner to engage in mealtime pretend play with his/her toy, including interacting with your toy.

Activity 5: Reinforce Putting People Together
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: Let's Play with Puzzles

Materials: Duplo/Lego blocks (or similar) with a face on at least one block, any other toys that look like a person and can be taken apart

Lesson Objective: The learner will put non-human objects back together to create a more human-like toy.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the assembled magnetic person. Say, "I am going to take him/her apart!" while taking the toy apart. Say, "Now I am going to put him/her back together!" while putting the toy back together. Take the magnetic person apart again and say, "Can you put him/her back together?" Once the learner puts the toy together, have the learner give the toy a pretend high-five and use the toy in pretend play.

Lesson 2: Putting It Together

Materials: Mr. Potato Head™ or any other toys that look like a person and can be taken apart into human-like pieces (i.e., arm, leg, eyes, etc.)

Lesson Objective: The learner will put human-like objects together to create a human-like toy.

Lesson Description: Show the child Mr. Potato Head™ already put together. Say, "I am going to take Mr. Potato Head™ apart!" while taking the pieces off of Mr. Potato Head™. Then say, "I am going to put Mr. Potato Head™ back together!" and reassemble the toy. Take Mr. Potato Head™ apart again and say, "Can you put Mr. Potato Head™ back together?" Once the learner puts the toy together, have the learner give the toy a pretend high-five and use the toy in pretend play.

**Activity 5: Reinforced Putting People Together
Levels 3 and 4**

Lesson 3: Hey, That's Me

Materials: Any puzzle that includes people to be put together

Lesson Objective: The learner will put a picture puzzle together that includes a person / people.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the puzzle already put together. Say, "I am going to take the puzzle apart!" while taking apart the puzzle. Then say, "I am going to put the puzzle back together!" and reassemble the puzzle. Take the puzzle apart again and say, "Can you put the boy and girl back together?" Once the learner puts the puzzle together, have the learner give the boy and/or girl in the puzzle a high-five and pretend the puzzle is talking to the learner (i.e., "Thanks for putting me back together!").

Lesson 4: You and Me Puzzles

Materials: Picture puzzle of the learner, picture puzzle of a familiar person (i.e., cut a picture of the learner and a picture of a person familiar to them into 2-4 "puzzle" pieces)

Lesson Objective: The learner will put together a picture puzzle of their own face with distractors (i.e., pieces from other puzzles) present.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the puzzles already put together. Tell the learner, "Look, this is you! And this is ____!" Have the learner identify himself/herself and the other person verbally or by pointing. Say, "I am going to take both puzzles apart," while taking apart the puzzles. Mix up the pieces to the puzzles. Then say, "Now I am going to put the puzzle back together" and put each puzzle back together, while describing what you are doing (i.e., "This is a piece of your puzzle. I can see you brown hair," etc.). Once the puzzles are completed, have the learner identify them again. Then take them apart and have the learner put the puzzle of himself/herself together first and then the puzzle of another person. Have the learner verbally say (or point to) their puzzle and then the other person's puzzle.

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Activity 6: Incidental Entertainment Training
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: Just-A-Little-Human Movies

Materials: Cartoon or movie clip that has cartoon-based characters with human-like traits (i.e., animals walking and talking like people, vehicles that have facial features and talk), figurines (i.e., like Little People toys), and human-like puppet. (Example movies include Disney's *Bambi* and *The Lion King*, Pixar's *Cars*, and *Thomas the Tank Engine*.)

Lesson Objective: The learner will watch movies to gain interest in characters that have object and basics human traits.

Lesson Description: Tell child, "We are going to watch a fun movie!" Turn on video clip or allow child to pick clip. While watching, hold the figurine or puppet and say, "Wow, that character acts like a person / like me / like us!" Use exaggerated facial expressions and comments.

Hand the learner the figurine and/or puppet. To expand, have the child pretend to be a character from the movie with you and act out movie events. Use various toys when acting out movie events, like dolls, puppets, figurines, etc.

Lesson 2: Movies That Are a Little More Human

Materials: Cartoon or movie clip that has objects that become human, figurines (i.e., like Little People toys), and human-like puppet. (Example movies include Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* and Pixar's *Wall-E* or *Toy Story*.)

Lesson Objective: The learner will watch movies to gain interest in characters that are objects and become human or have increasingly human-like features.

Lesson Description: Tell child, "We are going to watch a fun movie!" Turn on video clip or allow child to pick clip. While watching, hold the figurine or puppet and say, "Wow, that character acts like a person / like me / like us!" Use exaggerated facial expressions and comments.

Hand the learner the figurine and/or puppet. To expand, have the child pretend to be a character from the movie with you and act out movie events. Use various toys when acting out movie events, like dolls, puppets, figurines, etc.

Activity 6: Incidental Entertainment Training
Lessons 3 and 4

Lesson 3: Movies With Human and Almost Human Characters

Materials: Movies that have cartoon characters who are human-like, figurines (like Little People Toys), and human-like puppets, action figures, or dolls. (Example movies include Disney's *Aladdin*.)

Lesson Objective: The learner will watch movies where there are characters that are both human and human-like or where one character becomes the other.

Lesson Description: Tell child, "We are going to watch a fun movie!" Turn on video clip or allow child to pick clip. While watching, hold the figurine or puppet and say, "Wow, that character acts like a person / like me / like us!" Use exaggerated facial expressions and comments.

Hand the learner the figurine and/or puppet. To expand, have the child pretend to be a character from the movie with you and act out movie events. Use various toys when acting out movie events, like dolls, puppets, figurines, etc.

Lesson 4: Act This Out

Materials: One of child(ren)'s favorite movies, toys that look like people (like Little People toys), movie character toys (if available), and dolls or puppets.

Lesson Objective: The learner will pretend to be a character from a movie and act out movie events with a familiar adult who is also pretending to be a character.

Lesson Description: Tell child, "You get to pick your favorite movie to watch!" Allow child to pick or identify favorite movie. Watch a short clip of the movie and say, "I'm going to pretend to be this character. Watch me!" Act out a short event from the movie.

Hand child a figurine, puppet, or toy character from the movie, and watch another clip from the movie. After watching a clip of the movie, act out the clip (or other scenes from the movie) with the child. Use various toys when acting out movie events, like dolls, puppets, figurines, etc.

Activity 6: Incidental Entertainment Training
Sample Movies by Lesson

Please remember the curriculum recommends watching a clip from a movie, not the entire movie, during a Meta-Play session. All of the movies listed have several scenes that fit into the category they are listed under, although the whole movie may not fit under that category.

Level 1: Cartoon episode or movie that has cartoon-based characters with human-like traits (i.e., animals walking and talking like people, vehicles that have facial features and talk, etc.).

Title	Year Released	Production Company(ies)
Movies		
A Bug's Life	1998	Pixar / Disney
Antz	1998	DreamWorks
Bambi	1942	Disney
Beauty and the Beast	1991	Disney
Big Hero 6	2014	Disney
Cars	2006	Pixar / Disney
Charlotte's Web	1973	Paramount
Cinderella	1950	Disney
Finding Nemo	2003	Pixar/ Disney
Lady and the Tramp	1955	Disney
Lilo and Stitch	2002	Disney
Minions	2015	Universal Pictures
Monster's Inc.	2001	Pixar / Disney
Planes	2013	Disney
Shrek	2001	DreamWorks
The Land Before Time	1988	Sullivan Bluth Studios / Amblin Entertainment / Lucasfilm
The Lion King	1994	Disney
The Rescuers Down Under	1990	Disney
Zootopia	2016	Zootopia

TV / Internet Shows		
Angry Birds Toons	2013	Rovio Entertainment / Toon City / Atomic Cartoons
Chuggington	2008	Ludorum
Dragon Tales	1999	Children's Television Workshop / Sesame Workshop / Columbia Tristar Television / Sony Pictures Television / Adelaide Productions
Home	2016	DreamWorks Animation
Looney Tunes	1930	Warner Bros. / Warner Bros. Animation
My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic	2010	Hasbro Studios / DHX Media Vancouver
Octonauts	2010	Silvergate Media
Popples	2015	Saban Brands / Zagtoons
The Adventures of Chuck and Friends	2010	Nelvana / Pipeline Studios Inc. / Hasbro Studios
The Hive	2010	DQ Entertainment, Lupus Films, Monumental Productions, Picture Production Company, Hive Enterprises and Bejuba! Entertainment
Thomas and Friends	2003	HiT Entertainment / Nitrogen Studios Canada, Inc. / Arc Productions
The New Adventures of Winnie-the-Pooh	1988	Walt Disney Television Animation

Level 2: Cartoon episode or movie that has cartoon-based characters exhibiting human-like traits. For example, characters who become human-like, animals who transition to become more human-like, etc.

Title	Year Released	Production Company(ies)
Movies		
Alice in Wonderland	1951	Walt Disney Productions
Beauty and the Beast	1991	Walt Disney Productions
Cinderella	1950	Walt Disney Productions
Home	2015	DreamWorks Animation
Inside Out	2015	Pixar Animation Studios
Ratatouille	2007	Pixar Animation Studios
The Jungle Book	1967	Walt Disney Productions
The Little Mermaid	1989	Walt Disney Feature Animation
The Princess and the Frog	2009	Walt Disney Animation Studios
TV / Internet Shows		
Alvin and the Chipmunks	2015	Bagdasarian Productions / OuiDo! Productions / Moonscoop Productions
Bob the Builder	1999	Hot Animation / Chapman Entertainment / HiT Entertainment / Rainmaker Entertainment
Despicable Me	2010	Universal Pictures / Illumination Entertainment
Doc McStuffins	2012	Brown Bag Films
Handy Manny	2006	Nelvana
Phineas and Ferb	2008	Disney Television Animation
Sid the Science Kid	2008	The Jim Henson Company
The Cat in the Hat Knows A Lot about That!	2010	Collingwood O'Hare Productions / Portfolio Entertainment / Random House Children's Entertainment / Treehouse TV

Level 3: Cartoon episode or movie that is cartoon-based and has human cartoon characters. For example, cartoon episodes that have children and adults.

Title	Year Released	Production Company(ies)
Movies		
Aladdin	1992	Walt Disney Feature Animation
Frozen	2013	Walt Disney Animation Studios
Hercules	1997	Walt Disney Feature Animation
Mulan	1998	Walt Disney Feature Animation
Peter Pan	1953	Walt Disney
Sleeping Beauty	1959	Walt Disney
Tangled	2010	Walt Disney Animation Studios
The Incredibles	2004	Pixar Animation Studios
TV / Internet Shows		
Inspector Gadget	1983	DIC Entertainment
Jake and the Neverland Pirates	2011	Disney Television Animation / Mercury Filmworks / Bardel Entertainment
Little Einsteins	2005	The Baby Einstein Company / Curious Pictures
Sofia the First	2012	Disney Television Animation
Super Why!	2007	Out of the Blue Enterprises / DHX Media
The Magic School Bus	1994	Nelvana

Activity 7: Parallel Puppet Play
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: Introducing the Non-Puppet

Materials: Mitten, oven mitt, preferred object or toy

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage with toys while an object puppet is present.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the preferred toy or object, and say, "Here is your favorite ____!" Demonstrate playing with the toy or object with one hand, while you keep the object puppet close by observing the play with the other hand.

Next, place the toy near the learner and encourage the learner to play with the toy. Have the object puppet move closer to the learner, farther away, and then closer again. Have the object puppet engage with the learner in a simple way (i.e., pushing the toy toward the learner, turning the toy around, etc.). If the learner is agitated by the puppet, have the puppet engage in parallel play alongside the learner instead.

Lesson 2: Part-Person Puppet Play

Materials: Paper bag puppet with eyes only, preferred object or toy

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage with toys when the object puppet with eyes is present.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the preferred toy and the puppet, and say, "Here is your favorite ____ and a puppet to play with!" Model having the puppet play with the preferred toy (i.e., have the puppet roll the car, feed the   baby, etc.).

Next, place the toy near the learner and encourage the learner to play with the toy. Have the object puppet move closer to the learner, farther away, and then closer again. Have the object puppet engage with the learner in a simple way (i.e., pushing the toy toward the learner, turning the toy around, etc.). If the learner is agitated by the puppet, have the puppet engage in parallel play alongside the learner instead. Attempt to have the learner engage in joint attention with the puppet by having the puppet's eyes move back and forth between the learner and preferred toy.

META-PLAY

Activity 7: Parallel Puppet Play
Levels 3 and 4

Lesson 3: Puppets Are People, Too

Materials: Stuffed animal and preferred toys

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage with toys while an animal puppet is present and demonstrate observing (joint attention behaviors) with the animal puppet and a familiar adult.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the preferred toys and have the animal puppet engage in joint attention by looking back and forth between the toys and learner. Introduce the puppet by saying, "Here is a ____. He/she is going to play with us!" Then, demonstrate playing with the preferred toy while the animal puppet interact in the activity (i.e., have the animal puppet say, "Hi, can I play?" or "Whoa, I love that toy!").

Next, place the toy near the learner and encourage the learner to play with the toy. Have the animal puppet move closer to the learner, farther away, and then closer again. Have the animal puppet engage with the learner by demonstrating joint attention behaviors (i.e., looking between the toy and learner). If the learner can tolerate the puppet speaking, have the puppet engage the learner and adult in conversation about the toy and engage in joint attention by looking from the adult to the learner and back.

Lesson 4: Let's Follow the Eyes

Materials: Person puppet, preferred toy(s)

Lesson Objective: The learner will actively respond to simple requests made by the human-like puppet while demonstrating observing (joint attention) behaviors.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the preferred toys and have the animal puppet engage in joint attention with you and the learner by looking back and forth between you, the toys, and learner. Introduce the puppet by saying, "Here is a ____. He/she is going to play with us!" Then, have the puppet engage with the preferred toy and ask the learner questions about the toy (i.e., "Can you roll it back to me?", "Can you help me feed the baby?"). Try to catch the learner's eye gaze and demonstrate joint attention with the learner, puppet, and toy (i.e., looking back and forth between each and drawing the learner's attention to the puppet).

Next, place the toy near the learner and allow the learner to interact with the toy. Have the human-like puppet begin to interact and make simple requests to the learner while you demonstrate joint attention and encourage the learner to engage in joint attention.

META-PLAY

Activity 8: What's in the Box?
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: Let's Look Inside

Materials: Box or bag that student can reach into to search for hidden toys, favorite small toys

Lesson Objective: The child will reach into a box or container with only a preferred item inside and find the preferred item.

Lesson Description: Show the child the Meta-Play Pelican and some of the child's favorite small toys. Demonstrate putting a favorite toy in the pelican's belly. Then, search for and find the toy. Say, "Look, I found the ____ in the pelican's belly!" Repeat with the child searching for the toy.

Lesson 2: Find What You Want

Materials: Box or bag that student can reach into to search for hidden toys, favorite small toys, non-preferred small toys

Lesson Objective: The child will reach into a box or container with a preferred item and a distractor inside and find the preferred item.

Lesson Description: Show the child the Meta-Play Pelican and some of the child's favorite small toys and the non-preferred toys. Demonstrate putting one of the non-preferred toys in the pelican's belly one at a time. Next, put one of the child's favorite toys in the pelican's belly. Then, say, "I'm going to find the (name of favorite toy)." Search for and find the favorite toy. Say, "Look, I found the ____ in the pelican's belly!" Put the two toys back in the pelican's belly, and repeat with the child searching for the favorite toy.

Activity 8: What's in the Box?
Lessons 3 and 4

Lesson 3: Pick the Doll

Materials: Box or bag that student can reach into to search for hidden toys, non-preferred small toys, human figurine

Lesson Objective: The child will reach into a box or container and find the item that is most human-like from a field of 3 items.

Lesson Description: Show the child the Meta-Play Pelican, some non-preferred toys, and the human figurine. Demonstrate putting two of the non-preferred toys and the human figurine in the pelican's belly one at a time. Then, say, "I'm going to find the toy that looks like a person!" Search for and find the human figurine. Say, "Look, I found the toy like looks like a person!" Pretend the human figurine is dancing, jumping, playing, etc. Put the two non-preferred toys and the human figurine back in the pelican's belly, and repeat with the child searching for the human figurine. Talk about how the human figurine looks like a person / like the child.

Lesson 4: Find the Parts of a Person

Materials: Meta-Play Pelican, Mr. Potato Head^{TM}, non-preferred small toys

Lesson Objective: The child reach into a box or container and find the pretend body part from a field of 3 items and then use the body part in a play routine (i.e., put it on Mr. Potato Head™)?

Lesson Description: Show the child the Meta-Play Pelican, some non-preferred toys, and a pair of eyes from Mr. Potato Head^{TM}. Demonstrate putting two of the non-preferred toys and Mr. Potato Head^{TM} eyes in the pelican's belly one at a time. Then, say, "I'm going to find the toy that looks like a person's body part!" Search for and find the body part. Say, "Look, I found the eyes. They look just like my eyes!" Hold them up to your face. Say, "They look just like your eyes, too!" Hold them up to the child's face. Say, "Let's put them on Mr. Potato Head^{TM}! We'll make him look like a person." Put the eyes on Mr. Potato Head^{TM}. Repeat the whole process with the child searching for other body parts from Mr. Potato Head^{TM} and then putting them on Mr. Potato Head^{TM} to create a person. Keep going until Mr. Potato Head^{TM} is completed. Talk to the child about how Mr. Potato Head^{TM} looks more and more like a person (like them) as you put him together.

META-PLAY

Activity 9: Acting on Other's Intent
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: What Do I Need?

Materials: Toy plates and silverware, second familiar person, neutral toys (toys the learner does not typically choose to play with but will tolerate).

Lesson Objective: The learner will retrieve an object for a familiar adult when given a model and verbal and gestural cues.

Lesson Description: Place dining room set materials in a visible place across the room. Have the second person give child neutral toys and say, "Here, let's play with these, unless someone needs our help."

Sit at table with a cup and say loudly, "Oh, no! I have a cup, but I need plates and bowls and utensils to eat my lunch." Have second person model listening to you, say, "My friend needs something," and then get you a dining room set item (like a bowl). Repeat 1-2 additional times, and call child's attention to the interaction if they do not notice.

Say, "I really need my other lunch things! I need help." Have second person look expectantly at the child. Gesture toward the remaining dining room set items, and repeat you need them. When the child brings you an item, thank them enthusiastically, ask them to get the rest of the items, and have the child pretend to have lunch with you.

Lesson 2: What Do You Need?

Materials: Toy plates and silverware, second familiar adult, neutral toys

Lesson Objective: The learner will retrieve an object for a familiar adult when given verbal and gestural cues.

Lesson Description: Same as Lesson 1, except the second person does not model retrieving items / helping you OR call the child's attention to you.

If the child does not notice your attempts to get help (i.e., making comments, gestural toward items you need, acting frustrated), then gain the child's attention by saying their name and repeat that you need help. The second person should only intervene if the child still does not get the dining room set items for you after you have called their name and stated that you need help.

Activity 9: Acting on Other's Intent
Lessons 3 and 4

Lesson 3: Puppets Need Help, Too

Materials: Notepad and pen, doll or puppet, neutral toys (i.e., toys that the learner doesn't LOVE but doesn't HATE), second familiar adult.

Lesson Objective: The learner will imitate a familiar adult's play behaviors while playing together with building blocks.

Lesson Description: Place the puppet, notepad and pen, and some neutral toys out of child's reach. Place the pen far enough away from the puppet that the puppet cannot "reach " it. Give the child some other neutral toys and have them place in the same area (i.e., at the same table or center).

Have the puppet pick up the note pad. Have the puppet pretend to say to the second adult, "Can you please get my pen for me?," while the puppet indicates he needs the pen (i.e., reaching, making sounds, looking at the pen, etc.). Have the second adult get the pen, and have the puppet pretend to say, "Thank you for getting my pen. It was far away!"

Repeat with child retrieving the pen for the puppet. The second adult can encourage the child to get the pen if they are not initial responding to the puppet needing help. Have puppet thank child and play with the notepad with the child.

Lesson 4: I Can Help the Puppet

Materials: Notepad and pen, dolls or puppets, neutral toys (i.e., toys that the learner doesn't LOVE but doesn't HATE).

Lesson Objective: The learner will help retrieve an object for a puppet when given nonverbal and gestural cues, including eye gaze.

Lesson Description: Same as Lesson 3 but without model from second adult. Second adult should only participate if the child is not responding to the puppet needing help.

META-PLAY

Activity 10: Object-to-Person Video Modeling
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: Let's Watch a Video

Materials: Device to record and replay video; small toys or objects.

Lesson Objective: The learner will watch videos that are filmed from the child's perspective of the child's or another's hands playing with a toy.

Lesson Description: Create a home video from the individual's perspective. Record a video (from the learner's perspective) of an adult's hands playing with a toy or object and then a smooth movement to the whole adult followed by videoing only the adult's face. Pause on the adult's face for approximately 3 seconds, and then make a smooth movement back to the toy or object. This should repeat at least 3 times.

Lesson 2: What Are We Looking At?

Materials: Device to record and replay video; small toys or objects.

Lesson Objective: The learner will watch videos that are recorded from the child's perspective of the child or another's hands playing with toys and a familiar adult calling the child's name.

Lesson Description: Create a home video from the individual's perspective. This video should be taken from the learner's perspective of the learner or another person's hands playing with a preferred toy. Next, a familiar adult calls the child's name and the camera shifts to the face of the familiar adult (highlighting the eyes), and then the familiar adult's gaze shifts back to the toy. The camera follows the gaze of the familiar adult, and returns to the toy. Repeat this shift and behavior at least 3 additional times in the video model.

Lesson 3: Let's Look at Faces

Materials: Device to record and replay video; small toys or objects.

Lesson Objective: The learner will watch a video that is filmed from the child's perspective of the child or another's hands playing with a toy and familiar adult, which includes a close-up of the adult's face.

Lesson Description: Create a home video from the individual's perspective. Record a video taken from the learner's perspective of the learner or another individual's hands playing with a toy. Then, a familiar adult calls the child's name and the camera shifts to the face only of the familiar adult with extended examination of the eyes (approximately 30 seconds). The gaze of the familiar adult shifts back to the toy, and the camera follows the gaze. Repeat this shift at least 3 additional times.

Lesson 4: What Else Can We Watch?

Materials: Device to record and replay video; small toys or objects.

Lesson Objective: The learner will watch videos that are filmed from the learner's perspective that include an adult and a puppet.

Lesson Description: Create a video from the individual's perspective. Record a video of an adult from the learner's perspective that starts with the face of a familiar adult and focuses in on the eyes. The eyes of the familiar adult shift gaze to the left, and then the camera moves to the left where the puppet is looking to the right, "catching" the gaze of the familiar adult. The puppet then looks directly at the camera, and then back to the puppet's right, and the camera then follows the puppet's gaze and shifts to the "receiving" gaze of the familiar adult. Next the familiar adult looks back directly at the camera. Repeat this gaze at least 3 additional times in the movie.

META-PLAY

Activity 11: Searching without Seeing Game
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: Where Did You Go?

Materials: Preferred toy or object; any cloth, towel, or blanket large enough to hide the preferred toy or object

Lesson Objective: The learner will tolerate not being able to see and access a preferred object that they know exists for a short time (less than 30 seconds).

Lesson Description: Show learner the preferred toy, and say, "Look, it's the ____! First, we are going to cover our eyes, and then we are going to play with the ____."

Say, "Watch me! I'm going to put the toy here" and place the toy in front of you. Then, say, "I'm going to cover my eyes and count to three. Look!" Cover your eyes, count to three, open your eyes, and begin playing with the toy.

Tell the learner, "It's your turn! I'm going to put the toy right here and cover it" Put the cloth over the toy. Say, "Count to three with me!" and help the learner count to three. Then, remove the cloth and give the learner immediate access to the toy.

Lesson 2: Find the Toy

Materials: Preferred toy or object; any cloth, towel, or blanket large enough to hide the preferred toy or object

Lesson Objective: The learner will tolerate being unable to see a preferred object that they know exists while seeking out and finding the object.

Lesson Description: Show learner the preferred toy, and say, "Look, it's the ____! First, we are going to look for the ____, and then we are going to play with it."

Say, "Watch me! I'm going to put the toy here" and place the toy in front of you. Then, say, "I'm going to cover my eyes and and try to find the toy. Look!" Cover your eyes, reach around in front of you, find the toy, and open your eyes. Say, I found it! Now I can play" and play with the toy.

Tell the learner, "It's your turn! I'm going to put the toy right here." Place toy in front of learners. Say, "Now cover your eyes and see if you can find the toy without looking!" Help the learner cover their eyes safely and direct them to find the toy. Once the learner finds the toy, uncover their eyes and allow them to play with the toy.

Activity 11: Searching without Seeing
Lessons 3 and 4

Lesson 3: Find the Person

Materials: Preferred toy or object, distractor toy; any cloth, towel, or blanket large enough to hide the preferred toy or object

Lesson Objective: The learner will tolerate not being able to see while seeking out and finding a preferred object out of a field of two objects they know exist.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the preferred toy, distractor, and cloth, and say, "Look, here is your (name of preferred toy) and a (name of distractor)! We are going to cover our eyes and see if we can find the (name of preferred toy." Say, "I'll go first." Place the preferred toy and distractor in front of you and cover your eyes with the cloth (or cover the toys with the cloth). Model searching for and finding the preferred toy. Then, act excited about finding the preferred toy and play with it for a minute.

Say, "Now it's your turn." Place the preferred toy and distractor in front of the learner. Say, "Now let's cover your eyes with the cloth and find the (name of preferred toy)." Alternatively, cover the toys with the cover. Then, instruct the learner to search for the preferred toy. Once the learner has found the preferred toy, provide verbal praise to show how excited you are and give the learner time to play with the preferred toy.

Lesson 4: The Puppet Searches

Materials: Preferred toy or object, any cloth, towel, or blanket large enough to place over the puppet's eyes, people puppet or doll

Lesson Objective: The learner will participate in "The Searching Game" by covering a puppet's eyes and hiding a toy from the puppet.

Lesson Description: Say, "We are going to play "The Searching Game" with the puppet. We will cover the puppet's eyes and see if he/she can find this fun toy." Place the toy next to the puppet, and put the cloth over the puppet's eyes. Have the puppet search for and find the toy. Then, uncover the puppet's eyes, and have the puppet play with the toy. Praise the puppet and demonstrate how excited you are that the puppet found the toy.

Then, tell the learner, "It's your turn. The puppet wants to play "The Searching Game. Can you cover the puppet's eyes and help him/her find the toy?" Have the learner cover the puppet's eyes, place the toy near the puppet, and guide the puppet through searching for the toy. Once the puppet finds the toy, instruct the learner to uncover the puppet's eyes and help the puppet play with the toy.

Activity 12: Imitation of Child's Actions and Emotions
Lessons 1 and 2

Lesson 1: I Can Copy You

Materials: Second familiar adult; various toys or objects.

Lesson Objective: The learner will visually attend to a familiar adult and see that the familiar adult is doing and feeling what the child is feeling.

Lesson Description: Show learner the toys and say, "Look at these toys. We're going to play with them!" Begin playing with toys. Have the second adult engage with the toys while you imitate the second adult's facial expressions, actions, and emotions. To gain the attention of the learner, use exaggerated facial expressions, actions, and emotions.

Place the toys in front of the learner. Based on the learner's actions while playing, follow the learner's lead. Begin to imitate the learner's facial expressions, actions, and emotions while drawing their attention to you while you both play with the toys. The goal is for the learner to attend you to and notice that you are imitating him/her, so you may need to exaggerate your imitative behaviors to draw the learner's attention.

Lesson 2: Let's Clap

Materials: Second familiar adult; various toys or objects.

Lesson Objective: The learner will imitate a familiar adult's simple actions.

Lesson Description: Bring out toys and say, "We're going to play with these toys!" Begin playing with the toys with the second adult. Next, say, "Do this!" and clap your hands approximately 2-4 times. Then, have the second adult imitate your action by clapping their hands. Repeat 3-4 times, while continuing to play with the toys and imitate the second adult's facial expressions, actions, and emotions.

Sit directly facing the learner. Place the toys on the table or floor in between you and the individual. Have the second adult sit next to or behind the learner. Based on the learner's actions while playing, follow the learner's lead while drawing their attention to you imitating their facial expressions, actions, and emotions. After gaining the learner's attention, say, "Do this!" and clap your hands. Repeat a 3-4 times, while continuing to play with the toys and imitate the second adult's facial expressions, actions, and emotions.

META-PLAY

Activity 12: Imitation of Child's Actions and Emotions
Lessons 3 and 4

Lesson 3: Let's Build a Tower

Materials: Blocks, Legos, 2 stacking toys, beads and strings, second familiar adult.

Lesson Objective: The learner will imitate a familiar adult's play behaviors while playing together with building blocks.

Lesson Description: Introduce materials by saying, "Look at these blocks! We are going to play with them." After gaining the learner's attention, say, "I'm going to see how high I can stack the blocks." Begin to stack the blocks one by one until they fall, then say "Oh no, they fell," while modeling the emotions common to disappointment (i.e. frowning, head dropped).

Sit facing the learner and place the pile of blocks between you. Say, "Do this!" to the learner, place the first block of your tower on the ground, and wait until the learner has imitated your behavior (independently or with prompting) to place another block on the tower. Repeat this for each block, so that the learner imitates building an entire tower, one block at a time. Once the towers are several blocks high, tell the learner, "Do this!" and knock over your tower. Imitate the facial expressions, actions, and emotions the learner displays as they knock over their tower.

Lesson 4: Untie the Knot

Meta-Play Materials: Colored lacing strings, second familiar adult.

Potential Classroom Materials: Jar with screw-on lid, Tupperware container with lid, or other difficult-to-use common materials.

Lesson Objective: The learner will engage in a challenging task and imitate a familiar adult's behavior to complete the task, as well as the adult's facial expressions and the emotions.

Lesson Description: Show the learner the challenging material and begin engaging in a difficult task with it (i.e., attempting to unscrew a "tight" lid). Work until the task is completed successfully. Throughout the task, demonstrate behaviors that show you are first frustrated with the task and then excited when you complete it successfully. Have the second familiar adult imitate your behaviors as you engage in them. Make sure the learner observes this interaction.

Set up the challenging task again and place one set of materials in front of the learner. Engage in the challenging task slowly, so the learner can imitate you. Also, exaggerate your facial expressions and emotions, so that the learner can recognize them and imitate them as well.