

Examples of schemas

Contents

Examples of easily identifiable schemas	1
Children with enhanced schematic play.....	3
Examples of schemas by activity	4
Expressive activities.....	4
Building and making activities	6
Exploring activities.....	8

Schemas are patterns of repeatable behaviour which can often be noticed in young children's play.

Examples of easily identifiable schemas

<i>Schema</i>	<i>Description of possible behaviours</i>
Transporting	A child may carry all the bricks from one place to another in a bag, the sand from the tray to the home corner in a bucket, push a friend around in a toy pram.
Enveloping	A child may cover themselves in a flannel when washing, wrap dolls and toys up in blankets and fabric, and cover their painting with one colour.
Enclosure/containing	A child may put their thumb in and out of their mouth, fill up and empty containers of all kinds, climb into large cartons, sit in the tunnel, build 'cages' with blocks.
Trajectory - Diagonal, vertical or horizontal	A child may gaze at your face, drop things from their cot, make arcs in their spilt food with their hand, play with the running water in the bathroom, climb up and jump off furniture, line up the cars, bounce and kick balls, throw.
Rotation	A child may be fascinated by the spinning washing machine, love anything with wheels, roll down a hill, enjoy spinning round or being swung around.

Connection	A child may spend time joining the train tracks together, stick the masking tape across from the table to the chair.
Positioning	A child may put things on their head, prefer their custard next to their sponge not over it, and lie on the floor or under the table.
Transforming	A child may add juice to their mashed potato, sand to the water tray, enjoy adding colour to corn flour or making dough.

Although children often show particular schemas in their play, not all children appear especially schematic. Some show one particular schema particularly strongly and others show several at once. Sometimes one schema which has been particularly strong will seem to fade, possibly to be replaced by another. Schemas offer a key to understanding ways in which children behave. In the planning process, awareness of children's schemas can be invaluable in matching curriculum content with children's interests and needs.

Children with enhanced schematic play

Children whose play is particularly schematic may have particular preferences in the setting for activities and resources. Examples of this include:

<i>Schema</i>	<i>Child's preferences</i>
Connection (joining)	Train track, construction, string, sellotape
Enveloping (covering, surrounding)	Dens, things in boxes, envelopes, dressing up, wrapping presents
Rotation (circles)	Circle games, wheels, roundabouts, spinning tops, kaleidoscopes
Trajectory (straight lines)	Throwing games, woodwork, percussion, football, playing with running water
Transporting (moving things)	Shopping bags, buggies, trailers

Examples of schemas by activity

Expressive activities

<i>Expressive activities</i>	<i>Connection</i>	<i>Enveloping and enclosure</i>	<i>Rotation</i>	<i>Transporting</i>	<i>Trajectory</i>
Fabric	Sewing, threading, weaving and knitting	Making bags	Taking turns	N/A	Sewing, knitting and weaving
Role-play	Filling handbags, arranging furniture, cushions, bricks	Filling bags, dressing up dolls in cots, prams, dressing dolls, blankets over tables	N/A	Playing post people, or milk people, moving house, pulling toys on string	Appropriate ways of running, throwing, kicking in role
Paint	Patterns and symmetry	Borders for pictures, bubble painting, covering paintings	Mixing paint, finger painting, paint rollers, marble painting	Carrying paint/water to objects	Spray and splatter painting, blow painting, squeezezy bottle

Workshop	Sellotape, string, boxes, glue, junk modelling, kites, threading	Masks, hats, wrapping up, crowns, tape, putting things in boxes papier mache	Making containers or vehicles	Making containers or vehicles	Paper aeroplanes, toy parachutes, elastic bands, catapults
Books	Making books	Opening and closing books	Repetitive stories and rhymes	Going to the library, taking books to special places	N/A
Graphics	Symmetry and calendars	Envelopes, writing in little books, letter boxes	Round paper Spirograph	Sending and receiving letters, parcels and messages	Rulers, drawing/ writing about cars and planes
Music and sound	Percussion	Headphones	Record player, rounds, chants, ring games	Taping music, listening and imitating	Percussion

Building and making activities

<i>Building and making activities</i>	<i>Connection</i>	<i>Enveloping and enclosure</i>	<i>Rotation</i>	<i>Transporting</i>	<i>Trajectory</i>
Small world	Train track, people, cars, layouts, animals	N/A	N/A	Cars and tractors, trains, collections, layouts	Cars and ramps
Games and puzzles	Dominoes, jigsaws, matching and tessellating games and magnetic fishing	Feely boxes, lotto	Turn-taking, Incy Wincy spider	Whisper games, snakes and ladders and ludo	Throwing dice or snakes and ladders
Small construction	Marble run	Putting away, houses for things	Cog wheels	Models with wheels	Building and demolishing towers, marble run
Large construction	Bricks and blocks	Burying things, houses for things	Cog wheels	Models with wheels	Making rockets, fast trains

Woodwork	Nails, nuts, bolts, wood to hammer	N/A	Drill Vice	Making things with wheels	Hammering Sawing
Cooking	Sequence in recipes	Picnic food, sandwiches, mince pies, pasties, stuffing and putting things away	Stirring, whisking, mixing, washing, liquidiser, rolling out pastry	Shopping for ingredients, taking things to oven or fridge, giving out food	Popcorn, chopping

Exploring activities

<i>Exploring activities</i>	<i>Connection</i>	<i>Enveloping and enclosure</i>	<i>Rotation</i>	<i>Transporting</i>	<i>Trajectory</i>
Computer	Loading word processing, printing and symmetry	N/A	Sequencing and making patterns	Printing work	Pressing buttons
Outdoor play	Making up games, circle games, gardening, parachute games, obstacle courses, hose pipes	Burying things, hiding in or under tents, dens, hide and seek, parachutes, playing in boxes and boats	Sprinkler, skipping, hoops, rolling tyres down hills, wheeled toys, circular obstacle course	Trucks for collecting and carrying, road games, suitcase, moving equipment	Watering - pipes and cans. Flags, nets, running, hitting, throwing and aiming games. Balls, bats and skittles
Malleable	Connecting and modelling	Models with things inside, covering pies and cakes	Mixing dough and rolling/making balls	Dough to oven, carrying cakes in egg boxes	Garlic crush, hammering and throwing clay

Investigation	Electric circuits, pulleys, pipes and plumbing	Microscope, binoculars, bottle's, collections, seeds and bulbs	Giro scope, cogs, pulleys, wheels, spinning tops, kaleidoscopes	Collections, pulleys, snail trails	Catapults, pulleys, rotators and reflection
Sand (wet)	Pipes, tunnels, sandcastles, filling things	Burying treasure and objects, tunnelling	Archimedes screw	Sand in buckets and trucks	Digging
Sand (dry)	Funnels and bottles	Filling bags and socks, filling pipes, collecting in yogurt pots, pipes and tunnels	Sand wheel	Pipes, guttering, trucks, trail's	Things with holes, pipes, guttering
Water	Pipes, hoses and bridges	Washing things, filling up bottles and funnels, making boats, blow bubbles	Waterwheel sprinkler	Hose pipes and tubing, pouring, guttering	Things with holes, bubbles, pumps, sprays, squeeze bottle