A Playworlds Approach to Reading: What Role for Youth Librarianship?

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Introducing the work of Gunilla Lindqvist and her research in “play pedagogy” to the field of school librarianship and learning design for you.

Play as a gateway to literature and reading engagement.

Dramatic play and multi-generational joint imaginative engagement.
Narrative competence
Print literacy
Aesthetic practice
Emotional development
Experiencing texts in multimodal way
Children become: Producers as well as consumers of texts

Multi-generations find: Opportunities for joint imagining
History, Theory and Construction

Preschool: Dramatic Play

Early Readers: Reenacting Literature

Tweens and Teens: Digital Media
Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934)

Development through socially shared activities

Activity / imagination critical for human development

Teachers encourage creative imagination through

Creative imagination helps us understand the

Imagination and Creativity in Childhood (1930)
Gilla Lindqvist (1942- )

Influenced by Vygotsky's theories of play and playworlds

Adults and children share world of fiction through interactive play

Literary / rhythmic / visual elements

Playworlds are not performances

Play is a process, not a result

*Farm children playing on homemade merry*
Teachers are mediators

Teachers guide children in problem-solving

Children influence direction of story by choosing alternative components
Narratives include role playing opportunities
- Writer / director / actor

One main theme or topic
- e.g. fear or racism

Visual art components
- Drawing
- Making dolls or puppets
- Creating sets or costumes
Alone in the big, wide world

Playworld first used in a Swedish preschool

Major themes: loneliness and fear

“Alone in the big, wide wor

Dialogue
- Fears of night sleep
- Dress-up
- Teacher portrayed Fear
- Drawing and visual arts
- Children created ghosts
- Dramatic performance
- Ghost dance

Performance with opportunities for new outcomes
Recent work in Finland, Japan, U.S., Serbia, Sweden

Psychological benefits for adults and children (Ferholt & Lecusay, 2010)

Improvements in language and social interactions (Nicolopoulou et al, 2010)
Playworlds & Readers

Preschool: Dramatic Play
Engagement with narratives and texts

Interdisciplinary collaborations:
- Drama
- Literature
- Music
- Dance
- Art

Mediated by adults or peers
Playworlds for Preschool:
Dramatic Play

Focus on school preparation

Transitional space between play and formal learning

Children feel encouraged, invited, trusted

“Snowflakes”
Examples:

Ferholt’s work with the Baba Yaga story (US-CA)

Hakkarainen’s work with narrative learning (Finland)
Storytime at libraries
Sharing texts and life experiences
Multi-media projects
Volunteers / siblings / grandparents
Playworlds & Readers:

Early Readers: Re-enacting Literature
Playworlds for Early Readers: 
Re-enacting Literature

Engagement with texts as independent readers

Focus on:
- Narrative competency
- Literacy
- Aesthetic skills
- Emotional development
enacting literature in a mixed-age classroom (Baumer & Ferholt, US-CA)

Dramatization of cultural narratives in kindergarten classrooms (Miyazake, Japan-Sapporo)
Group activities involving active reading (individually and as a group)

Dramatic play

Shared texts

Arts and aesthetics
Playworlds for Early Readers: Re-enacting Literature

Involve:
- Librarians
- Teachers
- Volunteers
- Parents and Siblings
- Multigenerations
Since 2006, the MacArthur Foundation has been funding the exploration of emerging forms of media and learning.

Over 100 grants totaling more than $61 million.

Digital media and social networking encourage youth to learn from peers “yet adults can tremendous influence in setting ‘learning goals’”
Playworlds for Teens: Creating + Sharing + Learning

Thought leaders:

John Seely Brown
James Paul Gee
Mizuko Ito
Henry Jenkins
Nichole Pinkard
Katie Salen
Classroom is changing

Group activities

Simulations (what-if, if-then)

Critical thinking versus memorization

Roleplaying

Playworlds for Teens: Creating + Sharing + Learning

“The end is, in fact, nearer..."
Quest2Learn
Charter public middle school in New City

Focus on inquiry-based and project-based learning

Game designers work with teachers

Students engage in “ways of knowing doing” to enable innovation
YouMedia Space for Teens
Collaboration between University of Chicago and Chicago Public Library

Digital media access for creating, expressing, sharing, learning with music, video, art, literature

“Online interest-driven activities extend young people’s learning and exploration significantly beyond experiences in school or local community programs”
Learning is becoming more participatory and inquiry-based.

Youth are using social networking, peer-teaching and self-learning.
Teachers can incorporate sensory-rich materials into the curriculum to create playworlds that develop reading literacy through:

- Music
- Art
- Performance
- Multi-media
21st century skills include:

- **Play** - experiment to problem-solve
- **Performance** - create alternative identities for improvisation and discovery
- **Simulation** - interpret dynamic models

*Jenkins (2004)*
Many thanks for viewing our presentation!

The presentation was prepared by members of the Distributed Research & Writing Group at SJSU’s School of Library & Information Science.

For more information, contact

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Games, Learning and Society. [http://www.gameslearningsociety.org/](http://www.gameslearningsociety.org/)


Quest Atlantis. [http://atlantis.crlt.indiana.edu/](http://atlantis.crlt.indiana.edu/)

Quest2Learn. [http://q2l.org](http://q2l.org)


OYO Embrace U!(Bali Kuta Beach) - http://www.flickr.com/photos/32594277@N04/3637712921

Chinese children at play --the dragon's head” (c. 1929) - http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c03632

Farm children playing on homemade merry-go-round. Williams County, North Dakota” (c. 1939) - http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/fsa.8a22436

'Chleuh Dancing Boy ~ Djemaa el-Fna, Marrakesh, Morocco' - http://www.flickr.com/photos/97647206@N00/481050514

Everyone Needs a Getaway’ - http://www.flickr.com/photos/99472898@N00/3875936992

Everyone loves Kites” - http://www.flickr.com/photos/71447254@N00/3622145096

Contact Origami” - http://www.flickr.com/photos/71447254@N00/3600458734

Not a monster, just misunderstood” - http://www.flickr.com/photos/99472898@N00/3592612220

The end is, in fact, nearer than he thinks” - http://www.flickr.com/photos/40252592@N05/3857844352

Albert Einstein

General Store

Warhol Troopers

Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima

Lurking in the Shadows

Beware the Frogs, Indy

Fun with Buttons

Lego Dioramas: We Begin Charting a Course

And she is buying a stairway...

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