

Handout 7.1*

Learning Through Play

Choose three toys that might be found in a classroom for children under 5 years old, and write each in the space provided in the chart below. In the left-hand column, describe how a child might use the toy at each stage of play. In the middle column, list skills that could be built at each stage. In the right-hand column, suggest ideas for expanding on a child's learning with each toy, at each stage.

Sensory: *Play that involves using their senses—such as touch, taste, and smell—to understand how objects and people work.*

Functional: *Play that involves using objects in the way they are intended to be used, such as talking on a toy phone or sweeping with a child-sized broom.*

Pretend: *Play that involves understanding that an object can be a symbol for something else; for example, that a baby doll is a symbol of a real baby (includes both "early symbolic" and "dramatic play" stages).*

	Skills This Toy Could Build	What You Can Do to Expand Children's Learning
Toy #1: Sensory: Functional: Pretend:		
Toy #2: Sensory: Functional: Pretend:		
Toy #3: Sensory: Functional: Pretend:		