

Creative Arts Toolbox  
Come out to Play 2 February 2013

After receiving a handout on Loose Parts, the delegates made a name tag each from bits and pieces you would commonly find in a play setting. The aim of this exercise was for everyone to feel comfortable and connect to their own play instinct. This resulted in everyone laughing, chatting, and engaged in activity, producing some creative name tags.

Whilst this was going on the workshop leader read from the handout about Loose Parts and discussed what this means in an arts and crafts context, and that even though it's an activity using specific materials to create an artistic outcome, process and child led direction are still paramount.

The delegates were split into groups of 4/5 and each group drew a 'visual story' with each member taking it in turns to draw the next bit of the story – this was an animated, high energy activity illustrating a useful and easy activity to do with children. For the learners it raised awareness of encouraging drawing confidence, illustrated communication, turn taking, imagination, teamwork, listening skills etc.

The group discussed their stories afterwards and how participants felt it could work in their own environments. They discussed how they can provoke fun, laughter and emotional attachment to the images created, how to expand in a weekly session, and how to use it as a springboard to create a play. This is a mobile and cheap activity that can be done anywhere, using mud to draw, or sand on a beach.

The first group made egg box creatures and the second group made pipe cleaner creatures. Both groups were asked to name their creatures and tell the person next to them one thing that their creature does. This connected everyone with their 'play sense' and re-ignited their enthusiasm for 'old favourites' used in new ways. The delegates became very involved in creature making, engaging in 'getting to know' their creature and with the person they shared information with.

The workshop leader had created a 'habitat' before the start of the workshop, and the groups discussed how they could expand this idea to make a proper stage, environment, get more involved in the puppetry aspect on a one to one basis, create a theatre etc. This is another very quick, easy, cheap activity with lots of potential.

The delegates were motivated by the activities to think about how they could apply new ideas and old ideas with a new slant in their own play environments.