OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

Learning how to frame open ended questions is an acquired skill. The questions we ask while playing can expand thinking and lead to new discoveries! The best interaction leads to the “ah-ha!” satisfaction.

Making Predictions
These questions prompt future thinking and encourage understanding of action and reaction.
Which do you think will get there first?
What do you think will happen if we move this one over here?
How many friends do you think can fit in here at once?
What do you think will happen if we add drops of red and yellow?

Making Observations
These questions lead to reflective thought and expressing recollections aloud. Good opportunity to work on sequencing.
What happened when we raised the ramp?
What did you see while you were inside the bubble?
Which tool worked the best to connect the beams?
What were the bees doing in there?

Exploring Options
These questions prompt out-of-the-box or divergent thinking.
What else could we do with these?
What else could we try to make the ball roll faster (or slower)?
How can you get the pegs into the foam block? How can you get them out again?
How can I make this side go up?

Forming Theories
These questions promote thought about cause and effect, and encourage close observation.
Why do you think this car went faster?
Why didn’t the bubble break when I put my hand inside?
Why do you think we got round bubbles out of a square bubble wand?
Why do you think the bees fly out of the building?

DOS AND DON'TS!

DON’T label kids’ creations
“I like your horse”
DON’T direct
“that’s not what we do with the blocks”
“we can’t build a castle, these pieces are too small”

DO celebrate choices. “I love the yarn you have added!”
DO ask about their creations, you learn more! “Can you tell me about your creation?”

Open ended questions promote critical thinking and extended answers where closed ended questions require one or two word answers.

What color is the balloon?
(closed ended)

What makes the balloon float?
(open ended)

What is your doll wearing?
(closed ended)

Why did you decide to dress your doll in that outfit?
(open ended)
WHAT IS OPEN ENDED PLAY?

Open ended play can be described as play that has no pre-determined answers - children simply follow their imagination to allow the play to go in any direction their creativity takes them. As there are no set outcomes, there is no right or wrong with open ended play.

ABOUT US!

We are an environment for play. We build minds through play. We believe in the value of play. For more info, call 616.235.4726 or visit www.grcm.org.