

Mildred Parten



Parten's theory focuses on social play and its development, the ability to join groups of other children and the desire to do so begins at an early age and progresses through a developmental sequence. Parten focused on the different types of social play. In her research, she discovered that children of different ages actually played together differently. They were capable of different levels or categories of social play.

Theories In Practice

- **The categories of social play are still a useful tool to help focus us on how social play changes and develops at different stages of children's lives.**
- **Educators should understand that Parten's stages are not always followed in a linear fashion by all children.**
- **A child may not progress directly from one stage to another.**