

# Learning through Play Experience Tool

## Contextual Data Tools

Australian Council for Education Research (ACER) for:  
**THE LEGO FOUNDATION**  
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## Purpose of the Contextual Data Tools

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) worked with the LEGO Foundation (LF) to define a purpose for the Contextual Data Tools (CDTs).

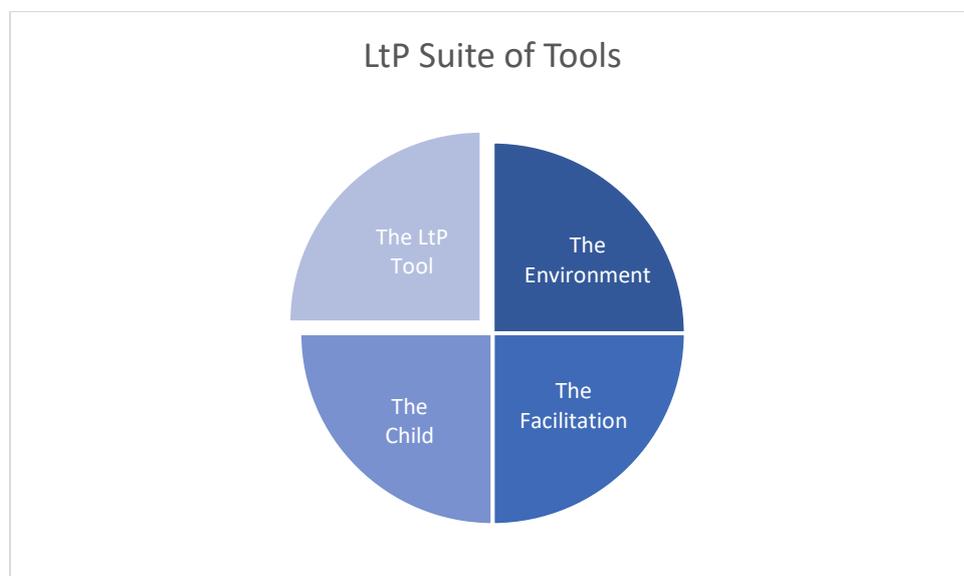
*The primary purpose is to put the LtP Experience Tool into 'context', by emphasising that we are not assessing the individual child assuming that there is something wrong with the child's performance or behaviour. But that we are measuring the child to understand whether anything should be changed in the context/environment/facilitation around the child.*

*In this case, the contextual data is essential in order to develop a strategy for how we improve the experiences and the environment, and if we don't have the contextual data, we will be tempted to change the child.*

It is important to note that these tools were designed for use within the current study. Amendments to the tools may be required when the contexts are further varied; for example, when the facilitator is a parent within the home, or for cultural settings other than Australia or the United States of America.

The modifications made are consistent with the CDTs being used in a small scale. The open ended nature of many of the questions provides the opportunity to glean a deeper understanding but do require greater interpretation and analysis. If these tools were to be used on a larger scale, some of the open ended questions may need to be revised in order to streamline the data analysis and make patterns and trends more apparent.

Three CDTs have been designed to complement the LtP Experience Tool, as shown. The CDTs are intended to be completed before or directly after the video capture of the play experience.



## Purpose and background to each of the Contextual Data Tools

### The Environment

This tool is comprised of two sections.

#### *The context*

This section is designed to provide information about the context in which the play experience took place. In this case, the context is defined by the physical space the play experience exists within. The contexts are grouped into three categories: Home, Educational Setting and Community. The data collector is responsible for identifying the context and including photographs for future reference.

This section is completed by the data collector before the play experience was filmed.

#### *Resources*

This section has two purposes. It is intended to be a record of the resources *available* as well as a record of the resources *used* for the play experience. It is important to note that this is a list of example resources. It is not an exhaustive list but a starting point for facilitators to identify the resources available to them. The MELE (Measuring Early Learning Environments) observational tool was used as a starting point for creating these lists.

This section is completed by the facilitator after the play experience was filmed.

### The Facilitation

This tool included three sections.

#### *Facilitator background*

Some closed questions are used to identify training and experience of the facilitator. These are followed by a series of open questions that are designed to elicit information about the facilitator's experiences, values and beliefs about learning through play. The LEGO Foundation's white paper 'Play facilitation: the science behind the art of engaging young children' was heavily drawn upon in the development of this section of The Facilitation tool.

This section is completed before the play experience by the facilitator.

#### *Experiential Intention*

This section requires the facilitator to articulate the intention of the play experience. The intention may be linked to the curriculum, Characteristics or State of Play. Examples are provided to encompass the range of intentions that are possible for a play experience.

This section is completed before the play experience by the facilitator.

#### *Reflection*

This aspect of 'The Facilitation' tool gives the facilitator the opportunity to reflect on the play experience. The key questions are designed to guide the teacher/facilitator's thinking towards improving play design in the future.

This section is completed after the play experience by the facilitator.

### The Child

This tool included two sections.

#### *Child background*

The purpose of the 'Child background' tool was to give context to the behaviour of a child captured in the play experience. The questions focused mainly on the child's background and interests.

This section is completed before the play experience by the facilitator.

The final question in this section is essential in acknowledging that the child's behaviour in this particular experience may not be reflective of their typical behaviour. This is the only question in this section that should be completed *after* the play experience by the facilitator.

#### *Child reflection on the LtP Experience*

This tool is designed to give the child an opportunity to reflect on the play experience. It is not intended to be a reflection of how the child *felt* about the experience because this will be evaluated using the LtP Experience Tool. Rather, the 'Child Reflection' Questionnaire gives the child the opportunity to share their perception of the quality of the experience and how they believed it could be used or improved. It should be noted that the data collector, not the facilitator, leads the child through a series of questions that was prompted by a scripted introduction.

The data collector is required to take approximately three photos during the play experience. These photos become a stimulus for discussion.

This section is completed after the play experience by the data collector.

The Contextual Data Tools v4

The Environment

*Context and resources*

Context

To be completed by the data collector prior to the data collection

Home	Educational Setting
Bedroom <input type="radio"/>	Classroom <input type="radio"/>
Kitchen <input type="radio"/>	Gymnasium <input type="radio"/>
Play room <input type="radio"/>	Science laboratory <input type="radio"/>
Living room <input type="radio"/>	Library <input type="radio"/>
Garden/Yard <input type="radio"/>	Water play station <input type="radio"/>
Other. Please specify _____	Oval/sporting field <input type="radio"/>
	Other. Please specify _____

Community	Photographs
Library <input type="radio"/>	<i>The data collector is required to take a series of approximately 3 photographs that capture the environment for future reference. Please attach photographs here.</i>
Museum <input type="radio"/>	
Gallery <input type="radio"/>	
Playground <input type="radio"/>	
Park <input type="radio"/>	
Beach <input type="radio"/>	
Oval/sporting field <input type="radio"/>	
Bush/forest <input type="radio"/>	
Other. Please specify _____	

## Resources

To be completed by the facilitator after the play experience. 'Used' refers to resources that are used in the filmed activity.

<b>Books and music</b>		
	Available	Used
Picture story books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fiction books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-fiction books	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Musical instruments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Sport Equipment</b>		
	Available	Used
Balls	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hoops	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bean bags	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Fantasy Play</b>		
	Available	Used
Dolls	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toy animals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dress up clothes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Masks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pretend food	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cooking equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toy cars/trucks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Technology</b>		
	Available	Used
Computer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tablet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Television	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Writing, Art &amp; Craft</b>		
	Available	Used
Pencils	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pens	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Crayons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Markers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chalk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paper	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paint	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clay	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scissors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tape	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Glue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stamps	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stickers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Other</b>		
	Available	Used
Wooden blocks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plastic blocks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Magnetic tiles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Construction materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Counters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Beads	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rocks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Counting frame	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Puzzles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Games	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pretend money	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natural materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The Facilitator

*Facilitator background, Experiential intention and Facilitator reflection*

Facilitator background

To be completed by the facilitator.

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**1 Name**

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**2 Please name any qualifications you have achieved.**

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**3 For how many years have you been working with children?**  
*Please specify and describe both educational and non-educational capacities where applicable.*

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**4 How familiar are you with each of the following teaching pedagogies?**

	Not at all familiar	Slightly familiar	Moderately familiar	Very familiar
Learning through Play	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Problem-based learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Project-based learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inquiry-based learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**5** Do you have experience with learning through play? If so, what do you find exciting about learning through play?

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**6** If you have experience with learning through play, what do find you challenging about it?

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**7** How familiar are you with each of the following types of learning and play?

	Not at all familiar	Slightly familiar	Moderately familiar	Very familiar
Free play	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guided play	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Games	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Direct instruction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**8** How often do you plan for each of the following types of learning and play?

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently
Free play	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guided play	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Games	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Direct instruction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**9 What does your ideal day of teaching look like?**

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Experiential intention

To be completed by the facilitator *before* the play experience.

**1 What was the intention of this learning through play experience?**

*These may be aligned to the curriculum or to other aspects of development.*

- *To establish an understanding of monetary amounts paid and change received.*
- *To provide an opportunity for children to refine their idea/model/creation.*
- *To provide an opportunity for children to build relationships with other children they are less familiar with.*
- *To provide an opportunity for children to make connections in their learning.*

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Facilitator reflection

To be completed by the facilitator.

**1 How closely aligned was the actual play experience to your intention?**

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**2 What worked well today?**

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**3 What would you change if you were to plan for this play experience again? Why?**

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The Child

Child background

To be completed by the facilitator before the play experience.

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**1 What is the age of the child?**

\_\_\_\_\_ years old

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**2 What is the gender of the child?**

Male

Female

Other

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**3 What is your relationship to the focus child?**

Child's classroom teacher

Child's parent or family member

A teacher at the child's school

Not previously known to the child

Other. Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

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**4 What is the child typically good at?**

*Consider the child's strengths in a social, emotional, physical and/or creative sense.*

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**5 What does the child typically find challenging?**

*Consider the child's challenges in a social, emotional, physical and/or creative sense.*

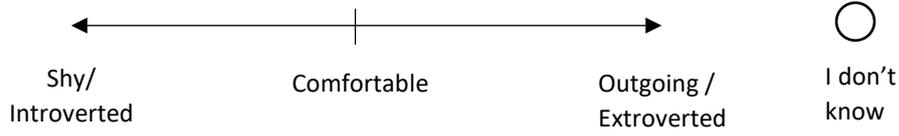
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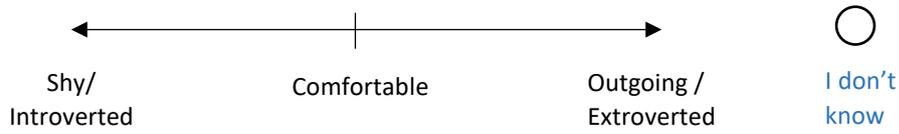
6

Use the continuums below to identify the social skills of the child in different contexts.

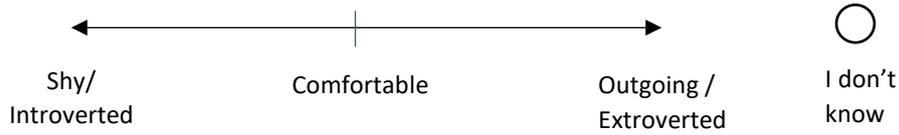
**Home**



**Educational environment**



**Unfamiliar environment**



## How much does the child enjoy each of the following play types?

	Enjoys a lot	Enjoys a little	Does not enjoy	Avoids	I do not know
<b>Physical play</b>					
<i>Active play (jumping, climbing etc.), fine motor practice (colouring, construction toys etc.) or rough-and-tumble (play fighting)</i>	<input type="radio"/>				
<b>Play with objects</b>					
<i>Use and manipulation of objects (building blocks, jigsaw puzzles, cars, dolls etc.)</i>	<input type="radio"/>				
<b>Symbolic play</b>					
<i>Use of objects or actions to represent other objects or actions (speaking into a banana as if it was a phone)</i>	<input type="radio"/>				
<b>Pretend play</b>					
<i>Creating alternate realities to the real world (e.g. being superheroes, playing mums and dads etc.)</i>	<input type="radio"/>				

8

**Answer each of these questions to best describe the personality of the child.**

*Indicate your answer by placing one mark on each scale.*

**a) How outgoing do you consider this child to be?**



**b) How co-operative do you consider this child to be?**



**c) How conscientious do you consider this child to be?**



**d) How does this child typically respond emotionally?**



**e) How open to new experiences do you consider this child to be?**



9

**Was the child's behaviour today typical of their general behaviour? If no, please explain.**

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Child reflection

To be completed by the data collector after the play experience.

*Data collector: Thank you for letting us watch you being part of the activity today. Sometimes adults don't really know what makes play fun for children. I wonder if you could help me to make this activity better for next time.*

**1 What did you enjoy about today's activity?**

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**2 What did you find challenging or hard in today's activity?**

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**3 Were there any challenges that you enjoyed? Tell me about them.**

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**4 Think about some friends who were not here today. Do you think those children would have enjoyed this activity?**

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**5** I have some photos of the play experience today. Can you tell me about what is happening in each photo?

*It is important to allow the child to discuss what is happening in each photograph. Use the following question starter examples to provoke discussion.*

*Why did you ... ?*

*Why do you think ... ?*

*What would have happened if ... ?*

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**6** Think about what you like doing at home, at school/kindergarten or with your family or friends. What other activities do you like doing?

*For example: sport, music, art*

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