

Examples of setting-based research and enquiry themes

How can I be a play partner through clay?

How can we use clay as an aid to developing boys' communication and language skills?

How can clay treasure boxes engage and inform parents/carers about early language development?

How can clay enhance children's storymaking?

For more information and to request a copy of the Clay Narratives project evaluation, please contact:

Julie Eden B&NES Early Years
(Julie_Eden@bathnes.gov.uk)

or

Nicola Theobald, Spiral Associates
(nicola.theobald@spiralassociates.co.uk)

SPIRAL



Clay Narratives

A communication-based project to develop children's early language

To explore how changing forms, shapes and images generate language for communication and invented narratives

Through first-hand experience in a potter's studio, practitioners develop skills of using clay as a medium for creativity and communication.

'Letting children find their voices'

Communicating through Clay

- Encouraging self-expression
- Making thinking visible
- Extending use of language
- Introducing and consolidating new vocabulary
- Exploring representations and associated language



Clay Narratives

The Clay Narratives project provides an opportunity for practitioners to develop creative approaches to developing children's early communication. Practitioners work alongside a potter to acquire the skills of a new craft. Practitioner learning is mediated by an educational consultant, providing guidance on how children's creative experiences through clay can be scaffolded and extended to maximise language and thinking skills.

Clay holds such potential for children's learning and provokes stimulating and imaginative conversation'

'It was important to respect silence during exploratory play, but I was amazed during our learning review – Ida was so animated and talkative about her creation!'

Project Outcomes:

- Improved outcomes for children across the EYFS Prime Areas of learning
- Improved engagement for target groups – boys, children with SEND
- Improved practitioner skills in relation to working with clay, early language development, quality interactions and family engagement
- Development of researchful practice as a strategy for setting improvement

Key ECAT principles underpinning talk:

- Responding sensitively to children's attempts to communicate
- Observing and commenting on the child's current interests
- Talking to children in a language they understand (expansions, recasts, open-ended questions)
- Taking time – don't jump in!

**Comment
Comment
Comment
Question!**