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**Our Time Together**

- Engineering Skills in Play
- The Language of Building
- Supportive Spaces and Materials

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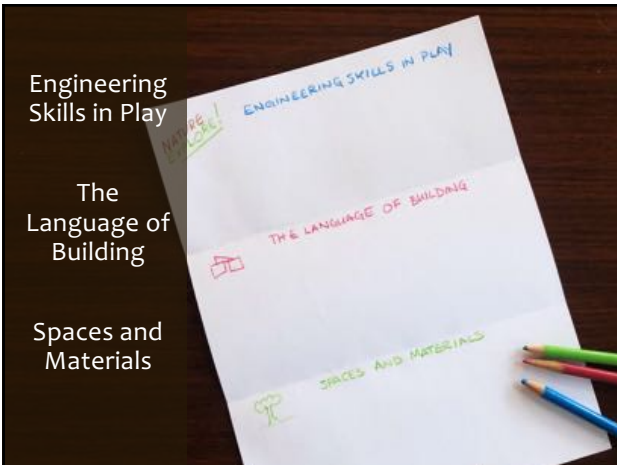
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Engineering Skills in Play

The Language of Building

Spaces and Materials

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**POLL**

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**POLL**

What do you remember building as a child?

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Children are Engineers

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Children are Engineers

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Children as Engineers

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Children as Engineers

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Children as Engineers

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Children are Engineers



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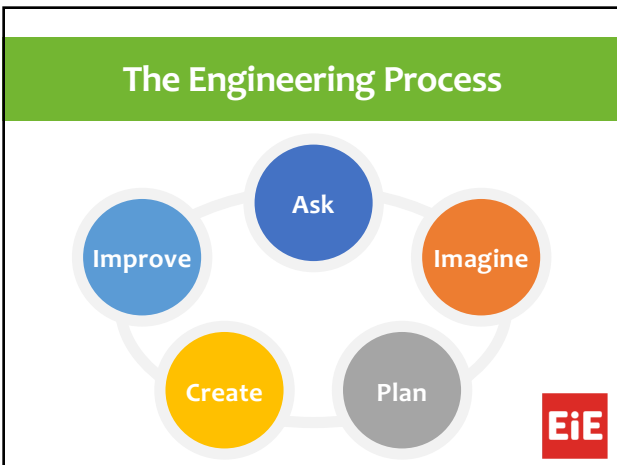
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**Construction/Engineering Skills Observed in Play**

- sizing
- strong base
- loading
- stacking
- aligning
- squaring
- cornering
- ramping
- bridging
- using fasteners
- covering area

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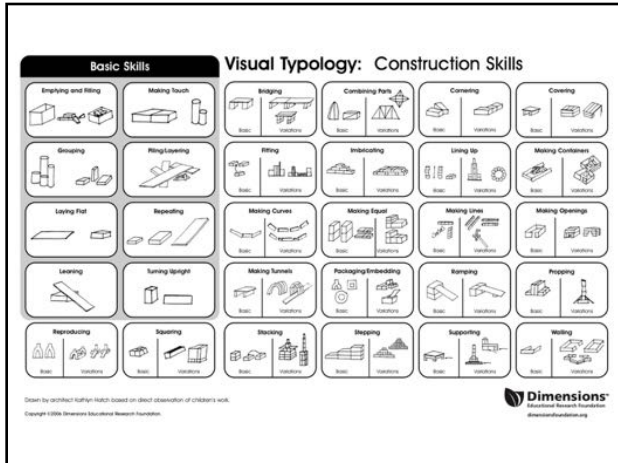
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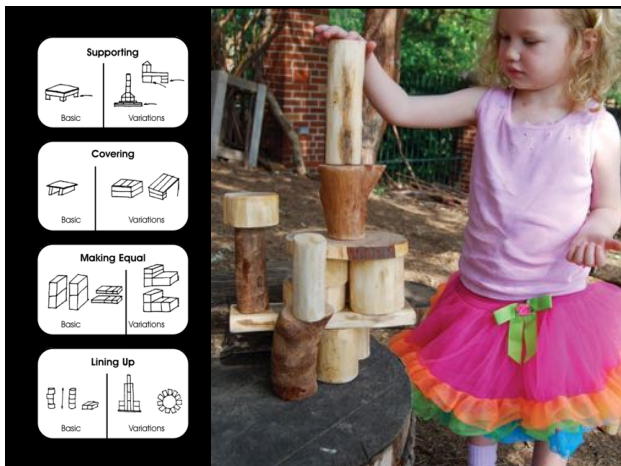
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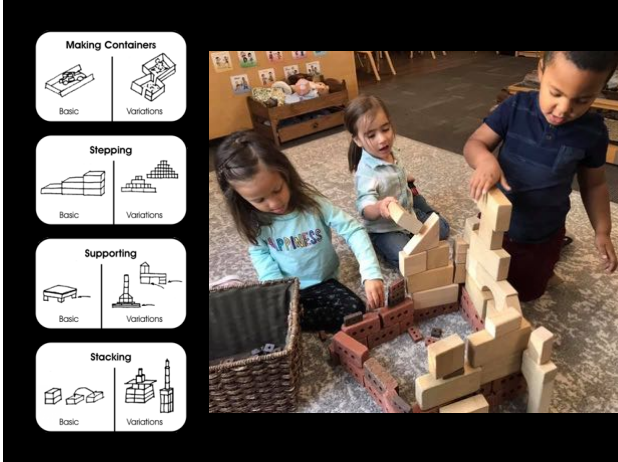
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Dimensions Educational Research Foundation			Documentation Form		Teacher/Observer: <u>KraFka</u>
Student Name	Age/Grade	Sex	Significance of activity		Date: <u>9.18.20</u> Time of day: <u>11:45 am</u>
June Stavos	4	F	Balancing	Sharing	Location: <u>NEC - Messy Materials area</u>
Sophia Chinander	4	F	Coordination	Engineering	Weather Conditions: <u>Very pleasant</u>
Mira KraFka	3	F	Cooperation		How Long Observed: <u>15 minutes</u>
Brief description of activity: A group of students made a teeter-totter and then took turns playing and experimenting.			Materials/Tools used: • A long flat wooden board • A long partially buried branch • Their own bodies		Area of the Classroom: <u>Outside - on NEC</u> <u>Messy Materials area</u>
<p>The students first brought the long, flat wooden board over to the log. Because the log/branch was partially buried, it provided a stable fulcrum. Through trial &amp; error the children were able to find the best positions for themselves, the board, and the branch. While initially sitting down, each iteration brought their centers of gravity higher and higher. By the end the girls were able to achieve an even, gentle rhythm going back and forth with minimum effort. With barely discernible movements shifting their weight they were able to alternate sending each other up and down.</p>					

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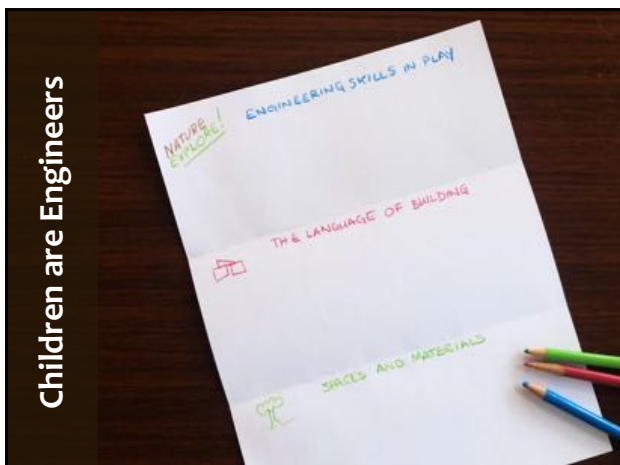
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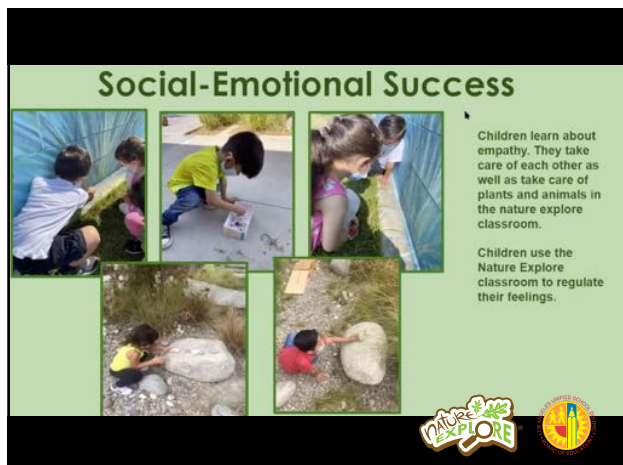
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Listen with SOUL...

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Children are Communicating

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Children are Communicating

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Children are Communicating

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Children are Communicating

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Children are Communicating

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Children are Communicating

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Listen with SOUL...

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*Tying it Together:*  
What are children communicating?

- Experiences
- Ideas and Plans
- Concepts
- Skills
- Feelings
- Preferences
- Imagination

A close-up photograph of a child's hands holding a stack of wooden blocks. The child is wearing a pink shirt. The blocks are stacked in a way that forms a small structure on top.

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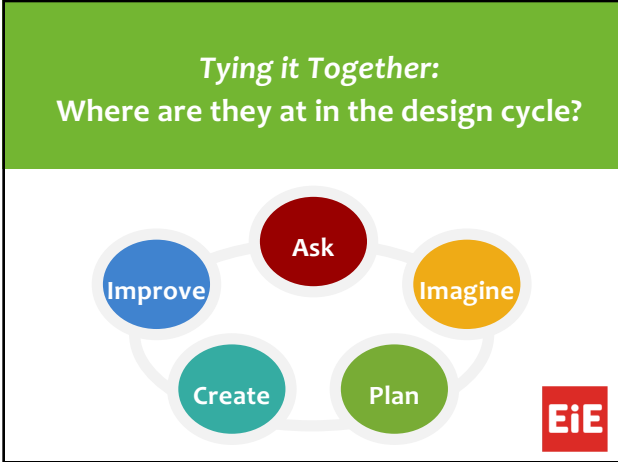
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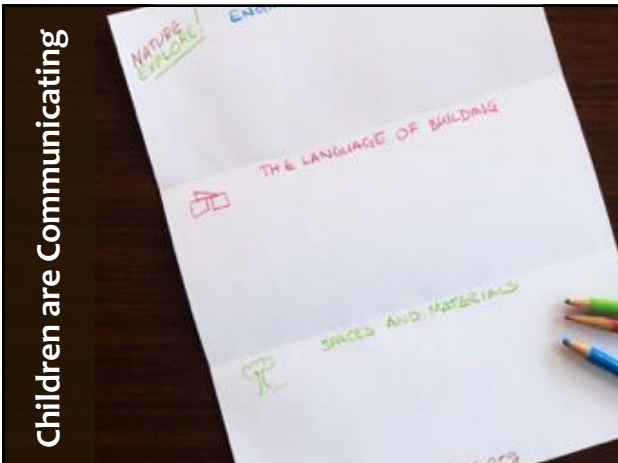
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### Mini Search and Build

Think about your favorite animal and where they sleep.

Now find three to six items around you to build/represent that home.



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### Supportive Spaces and Materials

*Set the stage indoors and out*



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Based on our Ten Guiding Principles in the *Learning with Nature Idea Book*



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### What's Worked?

- Non-Standard, Varied Materials
- Inspiration
- Predictable Spaces
- Easy Access

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### Think carefully about the properties of materials offered



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### ...for Block Building



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### ... for Large Scale Investigations



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### Open-Ended Materials



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*“... The basic, unprescribed qualities of natural items such as sticks and dirt require children to make 'something of nothing'...”*

*– Bohling, Saarela and Miller*



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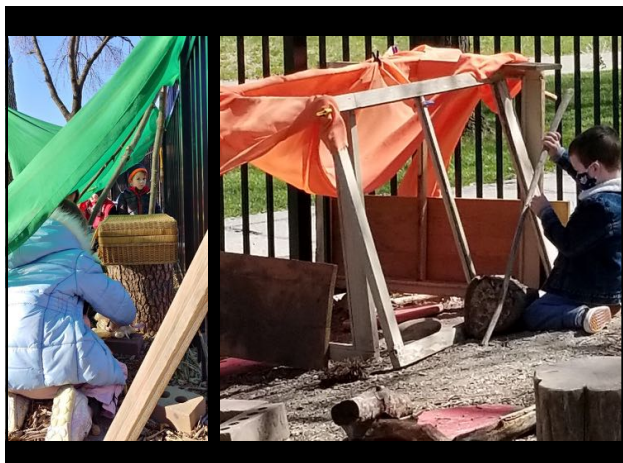
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“If we encourage children to hone their own imagination and inventiveness, they are less apt to need the transient novelty of a new toy to generate excitement or hold their interest.”

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### Predictable Spaces and Storage

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Easy Access Can Be Simple



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Easy Access Can Be Portable



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Real-life Tools



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Architectural Replicas and Images

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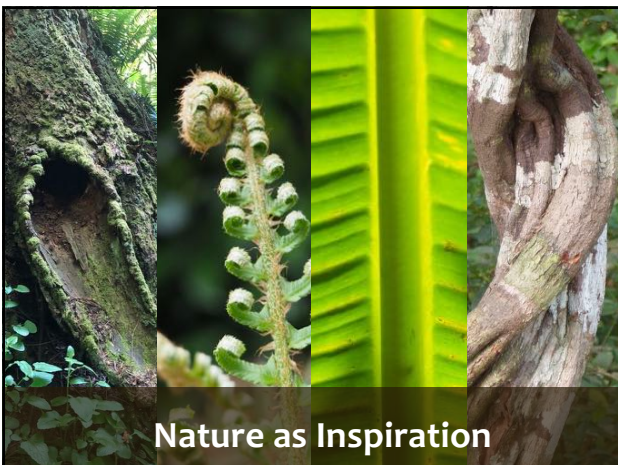
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Nature as Inspiration

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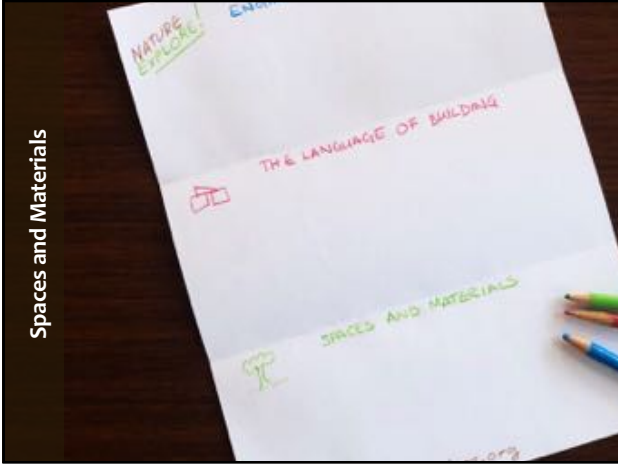
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Spaces and Materials



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**Outdoor Classroom Certification**

*Join our growing network of 500+ Certified Nature Explore Classrooms!*

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Our mission is to inspire joy and wonder in children, educators, and communities with a heart-centered approach to early education.

501(c)3 Nonprofit Organization

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