

Learning Together in a Nature-Based Kindergarten

Introduction

- ◆ **Nature-Based Learning:** Outdoor immersion, exploratory, and child-led.
 - Sounds, smells, textures, and tastes
 - Beyond normative boundaries
 - Instructional aims are negotiated with incidental opportunities
- ◆ **Literature Gaps:**
 - U.S. sociopolitical context
 - Children's perspectives
 - Occupational science (OS)/ occupational therapy (OT)

Research Aim:

To explore how children learn together in a nature-based kindergarten class.

Methods

- Qualitative descriptive
- Participant observation
- Photo-elicitation (child-led)

Findings

Learning as Co-Constituted

- ◆ Coordination of pedagogy with children and nature: Question and answer and, "Plan, Do, Review"

Transcends Time and Space

- ◆ Embodying personal life experiences, past, present, and future
- ◆ Meanings as evolving and relationally oriented

Culture as a Co-Creation

- ◆ Shared understandings and responsibility: Valuing playfulness and



Discovery



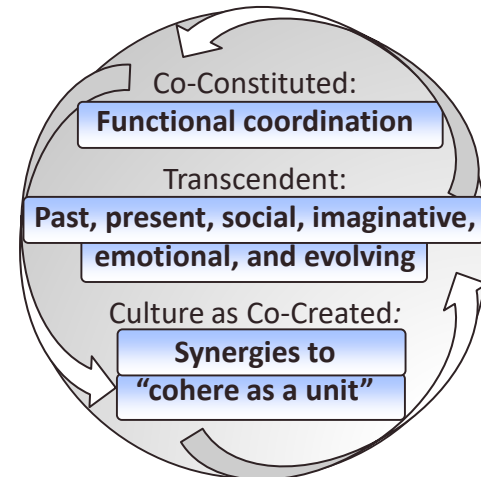
The Big Splash



Amari's Boat

Discussion

A TRANSACTIONAL PERSPECTIVE



Implications for OT

- ◆ School-based OT and beyond
- ◆ A class as the unit of analysis
- ◆ Co-constitutive character of learning and embodiment for intervention planning

References

- Dickie, V., Cutchin, M. P., & Humphry, R. (2006). Occupation as transactional experience: A critique of individualism in occupational science. *Journal of Occupational Science, 13*(1), 83–93. doi:10.1080/14427591.2006.9686573
- Merewether, J. (2015). Young children's perspectives of outdoor learning spaces: What matters? *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 40*(1), 99-108.
- White, E. J. (2015). Seeing is believing? Insights from young children in nature. *International Journal of Early Childhood, 47*(1), 171–188. doi:10.1007/s13158-014-0118-5