

## HANDOUT 5

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### Critical Thinking Activity: Designing a Toy

*Now that you have read and reviewed biosocial development during early childhood, take your learning a step further by testing your critical thinking skills on this problem-solving exercise.*

Developmental psychologists view play as the major means through which physical, cognitive, and social skills are mastered—especially during the preschool years. Unfortunately, many adults are so imbued with the work ethic that they tend to denigrate children's play. Some even punish their children for "horsing around," criticize preschool teachers for letting children play "too much," or schedule their children's lives so heavily with lessons and chores that there is little time for play.

Your task is to mentally design a toy suitable for a 2- to 6-year-old child, keeping in mind the physical, cognitive, and social needs of preschool children. Then answer the following questions.

1. What is the name of your toy? How does the child play with it or use it?
2. How old is the child for whom the toy is intended? What features of the toy make it developmentally appropriate?
3. What domain or domains of development is your toy designed to stimulate? How are they stimulated?
4. What are some of the specific features of the toy (e.g., size, shape, color, noise-making properties, etc.) that enhance its attractiveness and play value?
5. What considerations should be given to injury control when the toy is used?