



# A Mandate for Playful Learning in Preschool: Presenting the Evidence

*Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Roberta Michnick Golinkoff, Laura E. Berk, Dorothy Singer*

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We are robbing young children of play time at home and school in an effort to give them a head start on academic skills like reading and mathematics. Yet the scientific evidence suggests that eliminating play from the lives of children is taking preschool education in the wrong direction. This brief but compelling book provides a strong counterargument to the rising tide of didactic instruction on preschool classrooms. The authors present scientific evidence in support of three points: 1) children need both unstructured free time and playful learning under the gentle guidance of adults to best prepare for entrance into formal school; 2) academic and social development are inextricably intertwined, so academic learning must not trump attention to social development; and 3) learning and play are not incompatible. Rather, playful learning captivates children's minds in ways that support better academic and social outcomes as well as strategies for lifelong learning. Written in clear and expressive language, this book offers a comprehensive review of research supporting playful learning along with succinct policy and practice recommendations that derive from this research. *A Mandate for Playful Learning in Preschool* is a must read for teachers, policy makers, and parents interested in educating a generation of life-long learners who are ready for school and ready to compete in the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century.



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