

.lp, o, kl, p BA Furniture and Product  
Level One  
Module: 3D Design 2: PM1080C  
Project 3  
Semester 2: 2009

# FREE PLAY

This project involves designing a playground for children. It relates to a recent government strategy, The Play Strategy, which encourages the provision of 3,500 new local play facilities across the country costing £235 million. Play is a vital ingredient of a happy and healthy childhood, supporting children's physical, emotional and educational development. However there is growing evidence in England that children spend less time enjoying outdoor play than at any point in our modern history. Many existing playgrounds are characterised by low quality manufactured play equipment which is based on a narrow view of how children play. A move towards designing bespoke equipment that can be used creatively as part of a site specific project is now considered more relevant, often encompassing the surrounding landscaping and planting.

An additional strategy, Design for Play is aimed at helping designers create successful play spaces and discusses topics such as possibilities for learning about the natural environment, encouraging children of different ages to play together, building in opportunities to experience risk and challenges, safety (important but not overwhelming priority) and the balance of formal and informal play features.

## Work for study week:

Please research the following things and be ready to discuss your findings on the first session back after Easter (Thursday the 23<sup>rd</sup> April)

- 1) Read the following 2 government reports: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/play/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/play/)  
Under Related Links: The Play Strategy (88 pages) and Design for Play, A guide to successful play spaces (133 pages)
- 2) Research and visit St Giles in the Fields Church and churchyard park (especially existing playground), Covent Garden, London WC2. Measure, record and photograph the existing playground, this is your site.
- 3) Research existing playground equipment, especially [www.timberplay.com](http://www.timberplay.com)

- 4) Research timber by reading the following 2 books WOOD: Materials for Inspirational Design by Chris Letteri and Technique of Furniture Making by E.Joyce.

[www.ttf.co.uk](http://www.ttf.co.uk) [www.bwf.org.uk](http://www.bwf.org.uk) [www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk) [www.apawood.org](http://www.apawood.org)  
[www.fsc.com](http://www.fsc.com)

- 5) Visit the following 3 children's parks:

Coram Fields Park, Guildford St, WC1.

Spa Fields, Skinner Street, EC1.

Princess Diana Memorial Park, Hyde Park.

- 6) Think about the following structures in relation to the above: a tower, a bridge, a wall, a ramp, a tunnel, a hole, a corridor, a nest, a ladder, a hammock, a net, a staircase, a bell.

How could these structures relate (in no particular order) to the following activities: spinning, jumping, hiding, swinging, rocking, noise making, sliding, meeting, resting, chatting, picnicking?

Your playground design (which will replace the existing one in St Giles park) will incorporate some or all of the archetypal structures and activities outlined in section 6) above, making direct connections between them.

How will you make your play area welcoming, will there be boundaries or fences or is the area integrated into the wider space? How will your play area encourage creative play and imaginations?

The main material to be used for the play structures is to be timber, with additional natural materials such as rubber, earth, rocks, rope and bamboo to be considered.

## Requirements

Please develop your ideas using sketches and rough models.

A plan of your design and elevations.

Some examples of wood connections used in your structures (at 1:1)

Model at 1:10 using balsa wood sections / cardboard as provided.

A3 booklet incorporating above with final photo of A3 of model.

## Time schedule: 10-1pm in the studio

This is a 4-week project (plus study week and holiday)

Week 1: Thursday 23 April

Present research findings.

Week 2: Thursday 30 April  
Group tutorials...present 3 developed ideas for discussion.

Week 3: Thursday 7 May  
Progress in studio. Tutorials 10 to 12pm.

Week 4: Thursday 14 May  
Final presentation

Thursday 21 May: Marking in studio  
Thursday 28 May: Individual feedback sessions

### **Assessment criteria**

Research and its application  
Concept formulation  
Process and ideas development  
Outcome and presentation

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