Reflect and Response Paper

[Author Name(s), First M. Last, Omit Titles and Degrees]

[Institutional Affiliation(s)]

Author Note

[Include any grant/funding information and a complete correspondence address.]

Reflect and Response Paper

I have had a very exciting childhood because most of it was spent playing outdoors. Physical play is the core of every kid’s childhood who was born in the 19th century (Landreth, 2012). Similarly, most of my childhood plays are centered on traditional outdoor plays while some part of it was related to the school plays. In school, under the play-based learning programs, I developed a liking for coloring, drawing and solving puzzles. I also took part in acting plays such as playing a character of inanimate objects. After school, I used to ride a bike in the neighborhood with my friends. Some of the outdoor plays I remember playing were Floor is Lave, Follow the leader, Hide and seek, Four corners and Monkey in the Middle. On weekends, I used to visit the beach with my family where we used to build sandcastles and do fishing together.

Social play cover for the major portion of my childhood. Playing House and Doctor was the favorite thing I did in my childhood. Playing doctor while solving the mysteries of medical science at the time when I knew nothing about it, seems silly but it felt very good. Arranging the household components in different ways has always been a fascination for me. However, playing it with others was a different experience. Sometimes I would play the character of a royal princess with others playing different characters of the royal house. One of my favorite play was Floor is lava, in which we assumed that there is lava on the floor, so we were unable to touch the ground. The play would require the furniture and other household items around the house where a person can climb or rest. This was the most exciting play for me as we would play it with extreme laughter and joy. Another play that interested me was playing tag.

My favorite toys in childhood were mainly remote-control vehicles, Legos, jigsaw and dolls which are characterized into object play (Landreth, 2012). I would spend hours playing with these toys at home with my friends. I also liked tools that are used to build sandcastles whenever I visited the beach with my family. I still remember the time when my parents forgot to bring the tools. I cried while digging the sand with my bare hands and later gave up the idea of building a sandcastle.

Adults have played a major role in shaping my play. At school, it was mainly dependent on teachers how they would make a child develop an interest in a particular activity. Although most of the play at school was leaning based, I think it could not be effective in serving its purpose without proper guidance. Parents had another kind of influence on shaping my plays. Considering the fact, most of them were traditional plays, I received high encouragement from my parents. Sometimes they would tell me about their experience while playing the particular game and make me learn the tactics to achieve the meaning of a play.

My childhood plays were mostly driven by culture. In my culture, the trend of outdoor and social play is not new instead, it has been there from the start. Growing up as an African American however, has contributed towards a lack of access to resources and playgrounds. I believe that the factor of racism has influenced the childhood of many individuals in my neighborhood.

My favorite plays can be characterized by different development stages. Coloring and building sea castles can be characterized as an expressive play since I expressed my feelings with the help of a material (Landreth, 2012). Playing outdoor plays such as tag, hide and seek, etc. can be categorized into the physical plays as they involved me to perform physical activity (Landreth, 2012). Playing house can be characterized into both the dramatic play and expressive play as various stages in the play give rise to dramatic situations which allow children to act out immediately(Landreth, 2012).

Several therapeutic factors can be derived from my favorite plays. Drawing and coloring helped me reduce my anxiety and stress on various occasions by the act of catharsis. Playing tag with my friends contributed towards my anger management. Physical play, however, contributed to the improvement of my health. Although, I got many stitches as a result of falling that too has contributed towards boosting my immune system.

Analyzing my play preferences has convinced me to develop an opinion that, it has influenced the way I grew up into an adult. Playing House and Doctor has continuously developed a sense of responsibility and passion for me. It is because of those management qualities I have developed a sense of organizing my household components properly. By overcoming my feelings of anxiety and stress through drawing and building castles, I am now able to act accordingly and more confidently in extreme settings. My anger management has instilled a notion of tolerance and patience in me and my ability to avoid certain epidemics is solely developed because of a strong immune system.

Although I have realized the importance of several therapeutic skills such as social, communication, boundary setting and management, some of the skills that would be challenging for me to implement would be practiced play skills since my play activities lacked it. It would require proper guidance and experience to implement those skills. I envision myself as an educator in my future of being a therapeutic agent since my activities in school were strongly influenced by my teacher. I believe that educator could be most beneficial in providing counseling in a way which proves most effective for a child.

**References**

Landreth, G. L. (2012). *Play Therapy: The Art of the Relationship*. Routledge.