## Ready to Read_3inElements for Open-Ended Play

*Open-Ended Play allows children to express themselves in* play *freely and creatively, not bound by preset limitations.[[1]](#footnote-1)*

**Active Learning Ingredients:**

* Choice – The child chooses what to do
* Materials – There are ample materials that children can use in a variety of ways
* Manipulation – The child can manipulate objects freely
* Language – The child describes what he/she is doing while they are doing it
* Support – Adults and peers encourage the child’s problem solving and creativity

**Facilitate Active Learning in the library space:**

* Small, well defined niches and nooks
* Cluster objects together to create schema or themes
* Place books in the immediate area of play activities
* Create cozy areas for families to sit and read
* Create spaces that allow for children to engage in dramatic and constructive play

**A few basic features that enhance Active Learning:**

* Area Rug to Define the Play Space
* Bins, bin units, shelves to organize learning toys
* Bookcase for thematic books
* Puppet Theatre for themed puppets
* Magnetic Board for changeable magnetic activities
* Child height table and chairs
* Seating for adults and children

 **“Library Friendly Toys”:**

* Do not have too many pieces
* Are not a choking hazards and have no batteries
* Are not too loud- consider the noise factor for your location
* Are open-ended for multiple developmental levels, interests, and promote creativity
* Are a combination of toys on a theme and/or concepts (color, number, shapes, ABC)
* Are gender neutral
* Reflect community culture (food, dress-ups, etc.)
1. Frost, Joe L., Pei-San Brown, John A. Sutterby, Candra D. Thornton. The Developmental Benefits of Playgrounds. Olney, MD: Association for Childhood Education International, 2004. p.149. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)