



**Joy With The Marble Run**



I noticed Kamila, Victor and Madisyn playing with the marble ramps together. Kamila placed a marble on the yellow ramp which rolled down the yellow ramp and dropped to the carpet with a thud. I began to react because of the sound. This seemed worth watching.



Kamila tapped Madisyn on the shoulder and said, “Look it!” She dropped the marble in, it rolled down the ramp and thudded down on the floor again. Madisyn laughed. She liked the idea.



Kamila added a whole handful of marbles, which was pretty heavy. The yellow ramp began to tip, so she supported it to keep it from falling. The marbles rolled down making that same sound as each hit the carpet: thud, thud, thud, thud, thud, thud, thud.



The sound attracted Madisyn's attention. She shouted excitedly at what Kamila had done, "Kamila!"



“We need more stuff!”, she said. Madisyn brought over a blue cup and said, “How about this?” She placed it where the marbles would fall.



Then she added a blue tube and another blue cup. "I hope it works," she said.



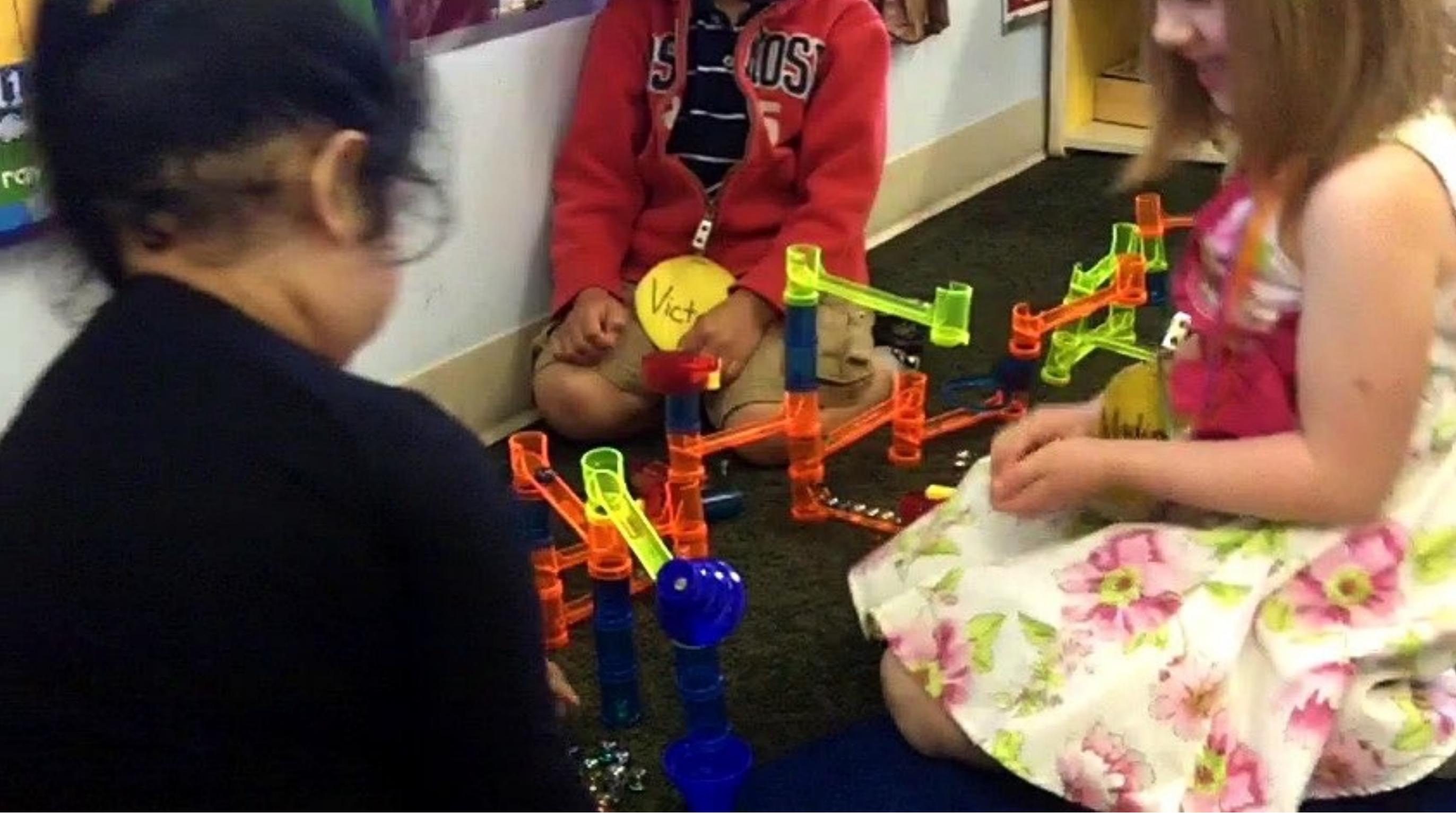
As Kamila looked on, Madisyn added the tube to the ramp and replaced the cup below. “This looks more better,” she said. “Right, Kamila?”



Both girls added marbles and laughed together. “It’s pretty funny,” Madisyn said.



As Kamila lifted it up to gather more marbles from underneath, the structure tipped over. “Oh, no! It broke,” Madisyn said. “We need it back there.” Together four hands got it stable again.



Madisyn added a blue bowl upside down on the top. “I made a lamp,” she said and laughed. “A lamp is funny, right?”



As Victor connected his structure to the end of the girl's one, Madisyn had an idea. "We need more parts!"



Kamila left and returned with another ramp. “I found another one,” she said.



Madisyn replied, "Cool. Let's put it here."



“Much better.”



As Victor and Madisyn stabilized the structure, Kamila tried it out.



Madisyn laughed excitedly at what they built together.  
And that is the story of “Joy with the Marble Run.”

## What it means...

Kamila, Madisyn and Victor, you obviously enjoyed each other and enjoyed collaborating together. You tried new things and persisted at your play. You were also seeing things in a different way. Who would know that the sound of a falling marble would be interesting to hear again?

You were solving the problems you encountered and experimented with how things looked as well as how added pieces affected the path of the marbles.

Madisyn, your enthusiasm provided a wealth of positive energy. By naming the play you provided a language that enabled the play to flourish.

# Opportunities.

..

As educators we try to think of what we could do to further this marvelous play. We could add beads to challenge the way things roll down pathways. Adding heavy ball bearings of the same size as the glass marbles might challenge their attentiveness to the strength of their structures. We could put the marble run in the water table and add paint to color the water so they could see it flow. We could add tubes to the water, too, and build suspended reservoirs with tubes attached to provide a constant flow.

# Possibilities...

The children may rise to the challenges we offer to further an engagement in physics. If this one event were posted, retold, and reviewed, this kind of engagement could bring more children into the play to add new ideas and possibly develop a new culture at our school. The children might contribute ideas that expand the ways to use the materials and further their social engagement in a community of action.

The result might be a shift in how families, educators and children think about what it means to go to school. We might come to think of ourselves as a community that involves all of us in a continuing, inventive investigation of how things work.

When we take time to really think about play, to think together to deeply consider one event and to alter the environment one, two, or three steps further, we can change our culture, step by step, to create an environment as a third teacher. We can also celebrate smart girls at work. Smart stuff is what we do at school. All of us.

# The Family View....

**Madisyn's Family:** I am happy to see problem solving, and listening to different sounds. It shows me that she pays attention because she has ideas about problem solving. Sometimes I feel she isn't listening, but this shows she is learning even when I think she isn't. She asked her peers to solve the problem. She didn't go to an adult.

Everything we do is learning.

**Familia Madisyn:** Estoy feliz de ver a la resolución de problemas, y escuchar diferentes sonidos. Esto me demuestra que le presta atención porque tiene ideas acerca de la resolución de problemas. A veces siento que no está escuchando, pero esto demuestra que está aprendiendo, incluso cuando creo que no lo es. Pidió a sus compañeros para resolver el problema. Ella no fue a un adulto.

Todo lo que hacemos es aprender.

## The Family View....

**Kamila's Family:** Kamila attends to a lot of details at home. This is an accomplishment of the students because of the teachers. Because of the school she is able to communicate and socialize. She was very quiet and shy before coming to school, but now she can accomplish things.

**Familia de Kamila:** Kamila atiende a una gran cantidad de detalles en el hogar. Este es un logro de los estudiantes a causa de los maestros. Debido a la escuela que ella es capaz de comunicarse y socializar. Ella era muy callada y tímida antes de venir a la escuela, pero ahora se pueden lograr cosas.

# The Family View....

**Victor's Family:** I am excited. I know he is learning. At home he is not fighting with other kids. He knows how to play with them. He works independently with Legos. I see him analyzing, and persistent. He does not get frustrated. He keeps trying until it works the way he wants it to. I am very happy to see this story about my son.

**Familia de Víctor:** Estoy muy emocionado. Yo sé que él está aprendiendo. En su casa no está peleando con otros niños. Él sabe cómo jugar con ellos. Trabaja de forma independiente con Legos. Lo veo analizar y persistente. No se sienten frustrados. Se sigue intentando hasta que funcione de la manera que él quiere que lo haga. Estoy muy feliz de ver esta historia acerca de mi hijo.