

The Smart Playground™ from KOMPAN combines Hans Christian Andersen Fairytale-Themed Playground Structures with Educational Teacher Guides and Educational Apps

The playground structure is designed to meet the increasing need for active, free outdoor play for young children ages one to eight, and also to fulfill their desire for opportunities for playful social interaction with parents, teachers, and park program staff. Inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, the playground structure has two facades: one side tells the story of the "The Ugly Duckling," and the other side tells the story of "The Little Mermaid."

Physical Play

The play structure is equipped with a slide, climbing wall, fireman's pole and stairs to reach the look-out balcony. It also offers a variety of movement opportunities for children to train their gross motor skills as they move around the structure or climb up the climbing wall. Children's vestibular systems are engaged and developed as they slide down the slide or make spectacular turns on the curly climber. Their fine motor skills are challenged through exploration of the numerous manipulative activities that they find throughout the structure, both inside and out.

Sensory, exploratory and role play

Children get to explore the fairy-tale stories through interaction with fascinating design details. The structure features numerous manipulatives offering an array of tactile and explorative experiences. On "The Ugly Duckling" side, children can move eggs along grooved openings, fill the scoops with playground material - grass, sand, berries or whatever is handy - and then dump them, or they can shift the duck's tail or push down the hen's head so she lays an egg. With "The Little Mermaid" facade, children can play with the crab and starfish game, manipulate the mermaid's tail, and feel the grooves along her tail or the pearls in her hair. The play structure has room underneath for role-play to unfold. Fairy tales will inspire their play. Children's imaginary play supports their language skills and understanding of the world.

Educational support through Apps: Read Along, Language Game, Running game, and Play Along

Adults can scan the QR code on the playground structure with their smartphones to download apps. Not all children will know the fairy tales, but they can discover the full version of the fairy tales in e-book format and have it read to them by the app as they follow along with the words displayed on a smartphone or tablet. The app lets children enjoy the stories in 15 different languages. In addition, they will discover numerous educational games that are designed to further children's interest in the stories. Parents and children can also enjoy the extra augmented-reality images to spark their imagination during play. This is an additional playground benefit to explore, but the playground works well without ever accessing the apps.

Playful teacher guides

The playground also comes with teaching manuals containing educational activities that the program staff can use to facilitate fun learning pursuits using the playground structure. These

educational activities will encourage children to re-enact, role-play and carry out learning activities. All these materials provide a basis for learning morals, for instance, by emphasizing who is being bullied in “The Ugly Duckling,” or promoting language development from the new vocabulary that the stories introduce.

Resources:

Check out the video of the Smart Playground: [The Smart Playground in Action](#)

[KOMPAN Play Institute Blog](#)

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