

## Testing chn. aged 2-3 yrs.

Concept/practice of comparison is not new. Parents, carers actively exchange comments on <sup>the</sup> first tooth, <sup>the</sup> first identifiable word, <sup>the</sup> first steps taken, <sup>the</sup> first rhyme retained & repeated. If this set of comparisons becomes prescriptive and young children are to be judged by certain 'performance' criteria, it devalues the essence of individuality which we should welcome <sup>and encourage</sup> in our children. Young children should be explorers and investigators in a wide-ranging way and should have the freedom to develop an understanding of their world which ~~they should~~ <sup>they should</sup> Children should be carrying out their own tests, to confirm their current understanding of their environment, which also means the ~~learning from failure~~ freedom to try out various strategies, some of which will not

be successful, but the value of that diverse learning experience should not be deemed as failure.

It is relatively easy to prepare young children, through repeated practice, or a merit/reward system to perform required tasks to order, but why? We must value childhood and challenge young children to think and to be aware, but we must be very wary of allowing them to become another person's product. It saddens me to see children being selected at three <sup>dissected in uniform manner in</sup> and placed in ~~at that~~ <sup>the same</sup> environment for the next fifteen years. Children do acquire concepts at different ages and stages of their development, but if ~~is not~~ children are to be 'hot-housed' to meet certain criteria, what happens to the intelligent child, the creative thinker, the one who questions?