

Appendix 1

Stages of Block Building

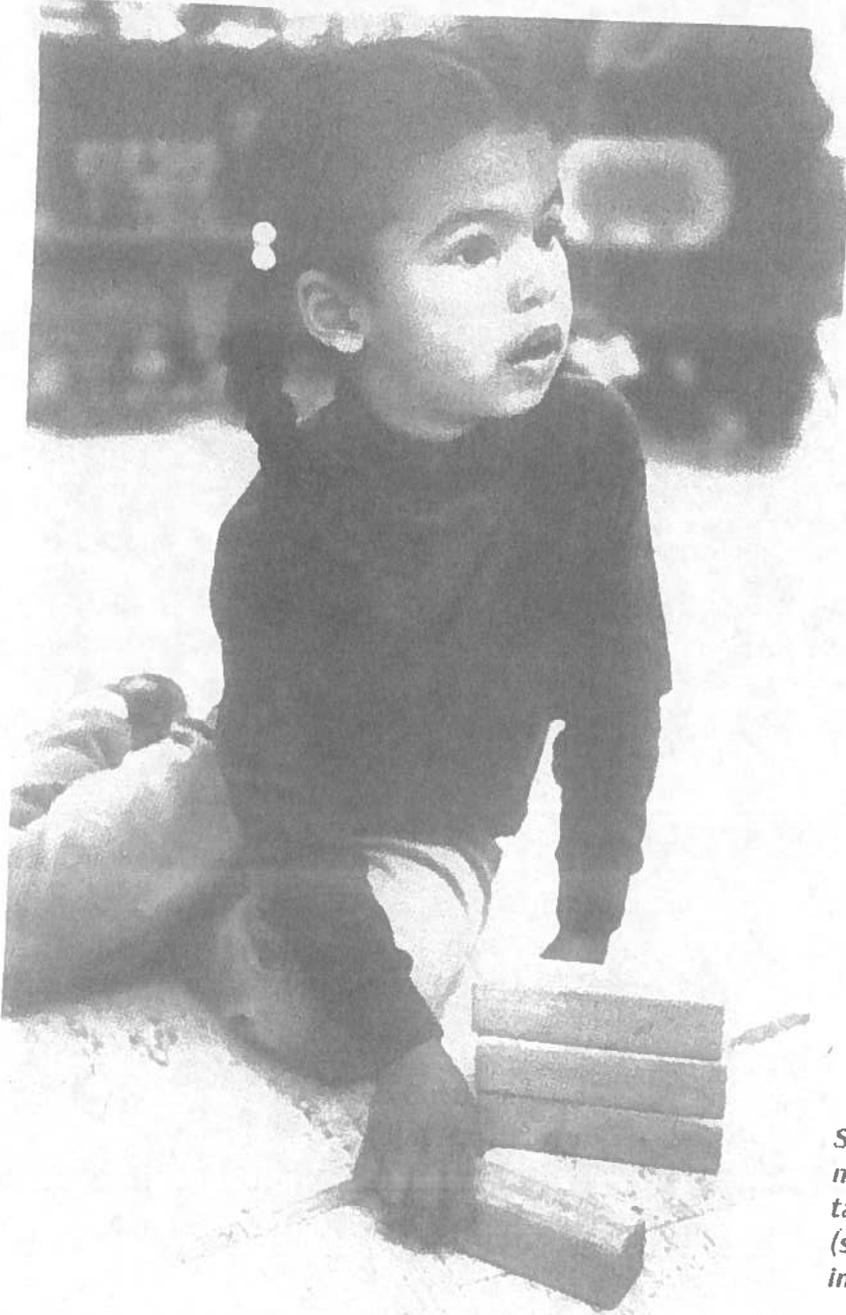


Whether children are introduced to blocks at the age of 2 or at the age of 6, they seem to pass through all the stages (except Stage 1) described by Harriet Johnson. The only difference is that older children go through the early stages much more quickly and arrive at a stage more appropriate for their age.

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The material in this appendix is based on Harriet Johnson's *The Art of Block Building* (chapter 2) and was condensed by Maja Apelman.

STAGE 1. Blocks are carried around, not used for construction. This stage applies to the very young child.



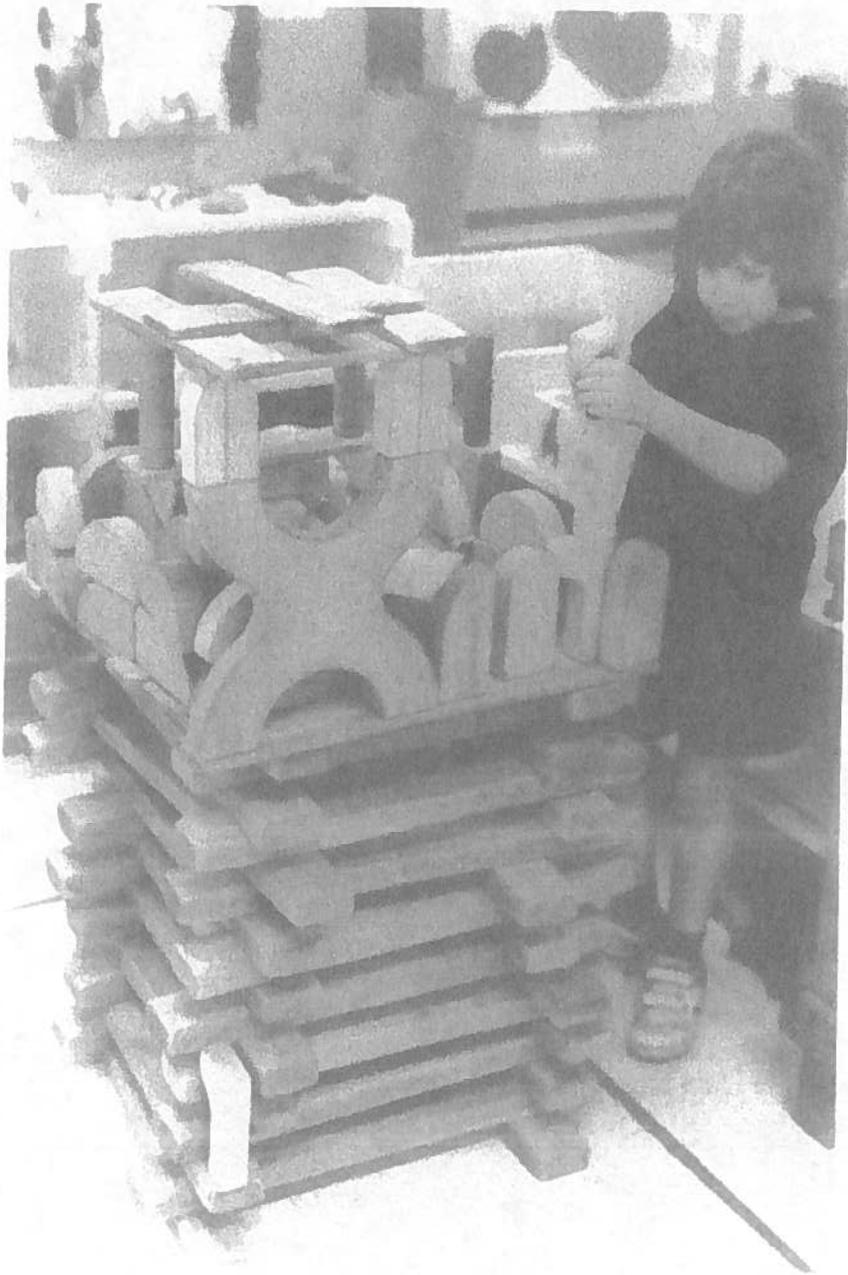
STAGE 2. Building begins. Children make mostly rows, either horizontal (on the floor) or vertical (stacked). There is much repetition in this early building pattern.



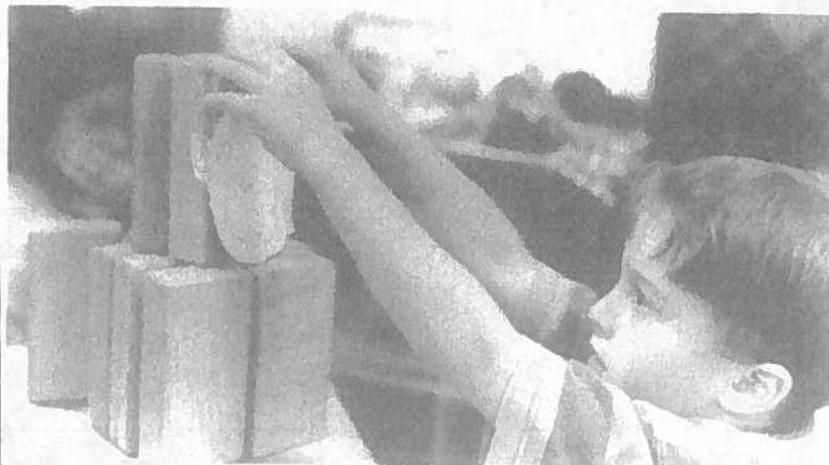
STAGE 3. Bridging—two blocks with a space between them, connected by a third block—is used.



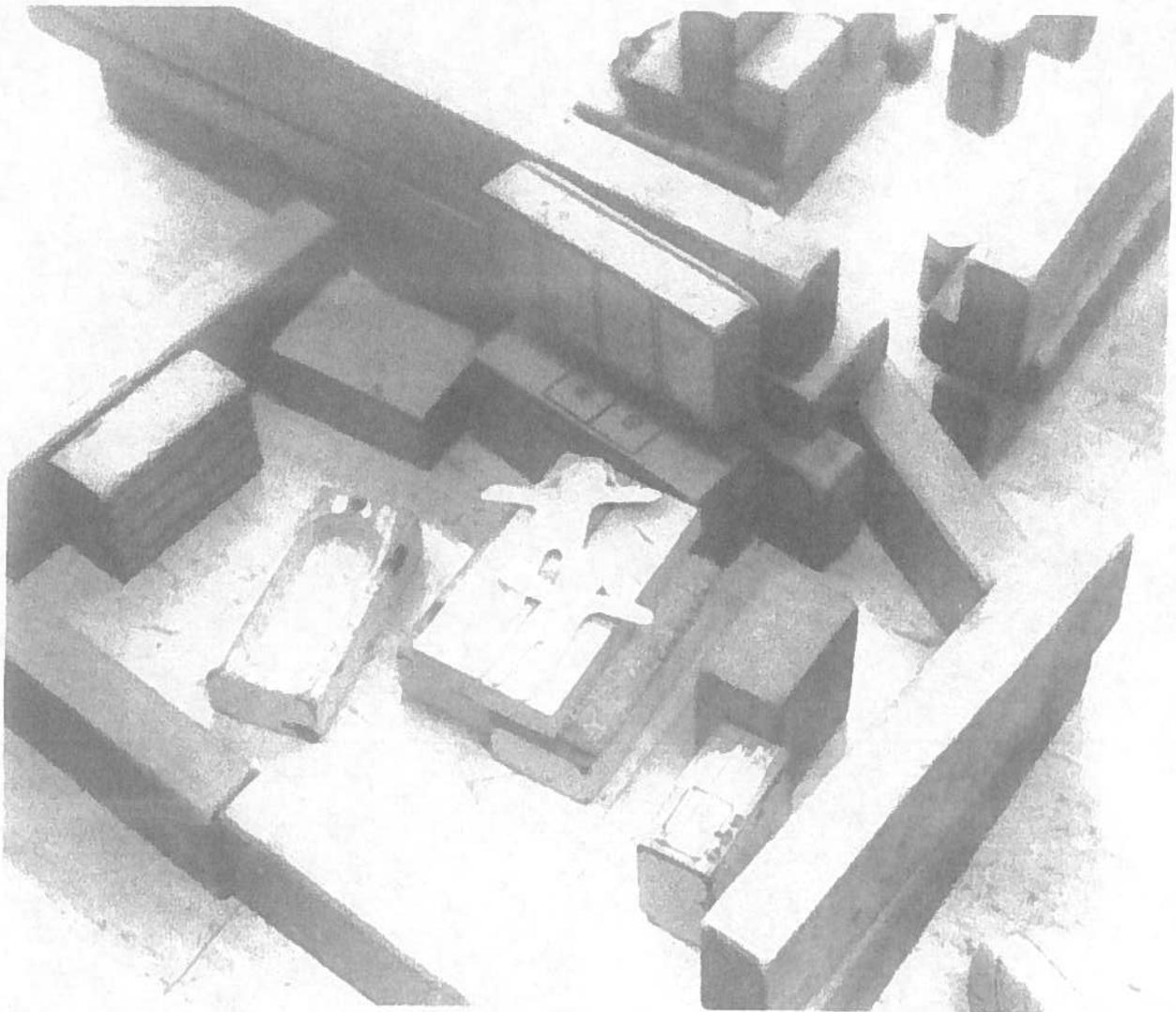
STAGE 4. Enclosures—blocks placed in such a way that they enclose a space—are made. Bridging and enclosures are among the earliest technical building problems that children have to solve. They occur soon after a child begins to use blocks regularly.



STAGE 5. *With age, children become steadily more facile and imaginative in their block building. They use more blocks and create more elaborate designs, using pattern and balance.*



STAGE 6. Naming of structures for dramatic play begins. Before this stage, children also may have named their structures, but the names were not necessarily related to the function of the building.



STAGE 7. Block buildings often reproduce or symbolize actual structures the children know, and there is a strong impulse toward dramatic play around the block structures.