



**Communication/
Language**

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing focused on waving hello and goodbye to different animals.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and wave hello and goodbye to different animals.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help manage the book and wave hello and goodbye to different animals.



Cognitive

Solving Problems

Option 1 (OO) A young infant watches a caregiver manipulate an appealing toy.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant watches a caregiver cover a toy, with the opportunity to uncover the hidden toy.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant searches for a toy hidden in a tube.



Self-Regulation

Getting Calm

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating experience with a nursery rhyme.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating experience with a nursery rhyme.



Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates with a caregiver in responsive interactions focused on a song and movement.

Option 2 (IG) Older infants participate in responsive interactions with a caregiver while dancing together.



Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices eye-hand coordination while holding one or two toys.

Option 2 (IG) Older infants practice coordinating the use of two hands while shaking rattles.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants practice bringing both hands together by clapping.

(OO)=One-to-One, (IG)=Informal Gathering



Birth–12 Months

Option 1 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Receptive language
Expressive language

A young infant participates in a book sharing focused on waving hello and goodbye to different animals.



Key Concepts

Book
Wave
Hello
Goodbye



Materials Needed

Hello, Baby Animals! A high-contrast book for babies by Amelia Hepworth (author), Cani Chen (illustrator)

or

Hello, Baby Animals by Lorinda Bryan Cauley

or, if available

Wave Hello, Wave Bye-Bye by Pamela Chanko and Scholastic



Also Promotes

Cognitive

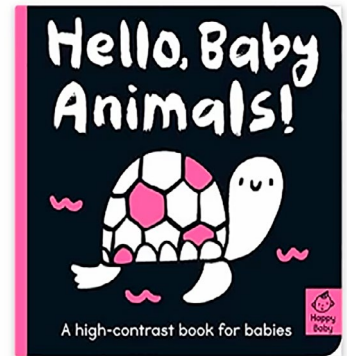
Revised: 6/30/2023

UPDATE: The book originally featured in the three options of this activity plan (*Wave Hello, Wave Bye-Bye* by Pamela Chanko and Scholastic) may be challenging to secure. Two additional book possibilities have been added to revisions of the activity plan. The three revised options offer examples from the high-contrast book *Hello, Baby Animals!*, but each of the activity options may be easily adapted for use with the books suggested in Materials Needed.

BEGIN: [*Sit with the infant reclined in your lap and support the infant's head in the bend of your arm so your hands are free to manage the book.*

Hold the book about 12 inches from the infant and point to the picture on the cover.]

ACT: I have a book for us to read together! Do you see the turtle?



Our book has pictures of animals. The animals are saying 'Hello!' We can say and wave hello and goodbye to the animals. Let's open the book and look at the animals!

[*Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:*

- *Use your own words, sounds, and hand gestures to describe the pictures. Examples: "The kitten is saying 'Hello!' The kitten is purring" (make a purring sound). "The bunny is saying 'Hello!' The bunny is hopping" (use hand and arm to make gentle hopping movements). The infant may enjoy watching you wave hello and goodbye to the pictured animals.*
- *Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the panda bear. The panda bear is saying 'Hello!' and smiling at you! The panda bear looks like the toy teddy bear in our room! Let's say goodbye to the panda bear. We can wave goodbye to the panda!"*
- *Respond to gestures and/or vocalizations.*
- *Transition out of the activity if the infant shows signs of disinterest. It is not necessary to look at each page of the book.]*

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "Our book had pictures of animals. The animals said 'Hello! You watched me wave hello and bye-bye to the animals. This was a fun book to read together!"*]

**Birth–12 Months****Option 2
One-to-One****Skill and Goal****Receptive language
Expressive language**

An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and wave hello and goodbye to different animals.

**Key Concepts**

Book
Wave
Hello
Goodbye

**Materials Needed**

Hello, Baby Animals! A high-contrast book for babies by Amelia Hepworth (author), Cani Chen (illustrator)

or

Hello, Baby Animals by Lorinda Bryan Cauley

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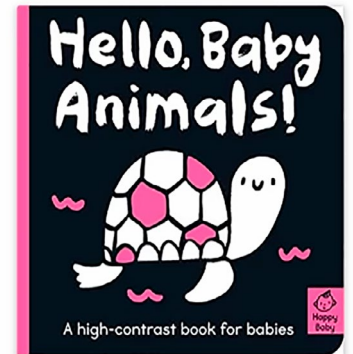
**Also Promotes**

Cognitive
Physical/Health

Revised: 6/30/2023

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Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to and describing the cover. Example: "This is a picture of a turtle. The turtle is swimming. The turtle is using its legs to swim (paddle)." Point to turtle's legs. "The animals in our book are saying 'Hello!' We can wave hello and goodbye to the animals in our book." Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:



- Invite the infant to help you turn the pages of the book.
- Describe and point to animals and what they are doing. Example: "Here is a picture of a puppy. The puppy is playing with a ball." [Point to ball.]
- Describe the infant's attention to the book. Example: "You are looking at a deer. The deer is eating (nibbling) this plant." [Point to plant.]
- Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are reaching toward the picture of the panda bear. The panda bear looks like the teddy bear in our room! The panda bear is white and black. Look at the panda's little black ears!" [Point to each ear.]
- Respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are smiling and waving your arms. You are watching me wave goodbye to the penguin! Bye-bye, penguin!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "The kitten is purring. Have you ever seen a kitten?"
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book sharing. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Sydney. You looked at the pictures of the animals. You smiled when I waved bye-bye to the animals! You helped me turn the pages. I think you liked this book."

Birth–12 Months

Option 3 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Receptive language
Expressive language

An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help manage the book and wave hello and goodbye to different animals.



Key Concepts

Book
Wave
Hello
Goodbye



Materials Needed

Hello, Baby Animals! A high-contrast book for babies by Amelia Hepworth (author), Cani Chen (illustrator)

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Also Promotes

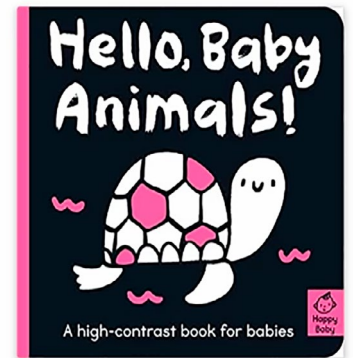
Cognitive
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Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit or stand next to you while you read. Invite the infant to help you hold the book and turn the pages.

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to and describe the picture on the book cover. Example: “Here is a turtle on the cover of our book. The turtle is swimming. The turtle is looking toward us! Point to turtle’s eyes. Our book is about animals saying ‘Hello!’ We can wave hello and goodbye to the animals in our book!” Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:



- Use your own words to describe pictures. Point to features you mention. Use hand gestures to show actions you describe. Example: “This is a bunny. Here are the bunny’s eyes. Look at the bunny’s ears. Here are some carrots for the bunny to eat.”
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you name. Example: “Here is a puppy. Where are the puppy’s eyes?”
- Spend more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: “You are looking at a penguin. Here is the penguin’s head. Here are the penguin’s eyes. The penguin has flippers.”
- Respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: “You said bye-bye to the puppy!”
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences and understandings. Example: “We waved goodbye to the animals in our book. You waved goodbye to your daddy this morning. Later today you can wave ‘Hello!’ to your mommy!”

Recognize the infant’s participation in the book reading. Example: “You helped me hold our book, Javier. You looked at the pictures of the animals. You pointed to the picture of the puppy. You pointed to the bunny’s ears! We had fun reading this book together.”



What to Look For—Options 1–3

The board book uses appealing pictures of familiar animals to promote the concepts of hello and goodbye. Your waving hello and goodbye as part of the book sharing adds an important element to your communication with the infant about the pictures. The repetition of saying and waving hello and goodbye is also a helpful part of the session. Some older infants will eagerly wave and others may prefer to watch you wave. Spending more time on pictures of favorite or preferred animals will show your responsiveness to an infant's interests. Some infants may be more interested in the animal pictures than in the hello/goodbye theme of the book.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Provide an appropriate toy for the infant to explore with his/her mouth if needed. ■ It is not necessary to look at and discuss each picture if an infant loses interest.

Enrichment ■ Provide opportunities for infants to say and/or wave hello or goodbye throughout the day. ■ Describe with your words and hand gestures some features of less familiar animals, such as how the penguin can move (flap) its flippers.



Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of stuffed animals or animal figures

Provide opportunities for infants to practice waving and saying goodbye with toy animals. Present a toy animal to infants during floor time. After a hello greeting from the toy animal, explain that our animal is going to go away. Invite the infants to join you in waving goodbye. Repeat with a different toy animal if infants are interested. Older infants may say goodbye as they wave. Acknowledge each infant's effort to wave and/or say goodbye.



Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

Children of all ages are familiar with saying hello and waving goodbye. There are many opportunities to practice greeting and saying goodbye throughout the day. Sing a hello song with children each day. Invite children to wave hello as they greet each other. The finger play "Where is Thumbkin" can be an enjoyable way to practice saying and waving goodbye. Invite children to wave goodbye to each finger as it runs away and hides behind your back.



Birth–12 Months

Option 1 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills

A young infant watches a caregiver manipulate an appealing toy.



Key Concepts

Watch



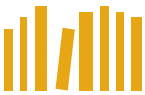
Materials Needed

Small toy (see Be Prepared)
Cloth



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Self-Regulation



Optional Reading

Tummy Time by Mama Makes Books
Reading Time! A Tummy Time First Words Book for Babies created by Mama Makes Books

Revised: 6/30/2023

Be Prepared: This activity is for a nonmobile infant. Secure one bright, attractive toy the infant does not see daily. Young infants typically prefer to look at bold colors.

Place a nonmobile infant who can hold up his/her head on his/her tummy on the floor in front of you. Another possibility is for you to sit on the floor and place the infant in your lap, facing out, with one of your hands securely holding the infant and your other hand available for manipulating the toy and cloth. Talk with the infant to help him/her feel comfortable.

Hold the toy for the infant to see. Once the infant begins to focus on the toy, move it slowly to the left, then slowly to the right, and then return the toy to a midpoint in front of the infant’s chest. Use short, clear phrases to describe the toy and what the infant is doing. Example: “Jake, you are watching our toy. Our toy is moving.” Acknowledge the infant’s vocalizations and movements.

Put a cloth over the toy while the infant is looking. Tell the infant in your own words the toy still exists but cannot be seen. Example: “Jake, the little toy is under the cloth.” Wait one moment and uncover the toy. Explain that our toy is still here. Example: “Look, Jake. Here is our toy! We can see our toy again!”



Repeat the activity sequence, including slight movements of the toy, if the infant remains interested. Even though the infant does not understand your words, it is important for him/her to hear the language associated with his/her movements and reactions. Positively acknowledge the infant’s efforts to watch the toy move around.

What to Look For—Option 1


Where you position the infant for the activity has obvious implications for the infant’s experience and your information. Big advantages of placing the infant on his/her tummy are the infant’s ease in seeing you and your face, and your ability to see the infant’s gaze and other reactions. This arrangement will not work for an infant who is just learning to hold up his/her head or an infant who prefers to be physically next to you for the activity.

**Option 1 continued**

Infants generally look at novel objects longer than familiar objects. The suggested covering and prompt uncovering of the toy is intended to provide visual interest by temporarily altering the infant's visual access to the toy. Do not repeat the covering of the toy if it is distressing to the infant. At a later age, infants gradually develop an awareness that an object or person exists even when it cannot be seen (object permanence). This activity option is not designed to promote object permanence (see Options 2 and 3).

If you anticipate the infant may be hesitant to participate in this activity, show a familiar toy first, gently remove it from the infant's line of vision, and then introduce the less familiar toy.

The infant may move his/her head to keep the toy in sight as you move it from side to side. Be mindful of the infant's visual tracking as you move the toy. Also, the infant may shift visual focus from the toy to you and then back to the toy. As suggested in an Extra Support tip, jiggle the toy if the infant becomes distracted.

 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Jiggle the toy to gain the infant's attention if necessary. ■ Provide frequent pauses in your talk and do not hurry the activity. The infant needs time to look at the toy and process your actions in covering and uncovering the toy.

Enrichment ■ After several instances of covering and uncovering the toy, move the toy to a different position on the floor (without moving the infant) and then cover/uncover the toy in this location.

Birth–12 Months

Option 2 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Problem-solving

An older infant watches a caregiver cover a toy, with the opportunity to uncover the hidden toy.



Key Concepts

Watch
Under



Materials Needed

Small toy (see Be Prepared)
Cloth



Also Promotes

Self-Regulation
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can crawl or is learning to move independently on the floor. Secure a small toy that will be of strong interest to the infant. It can be a favorite toy. Offer the activity in an area of your room with few distractions.

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor facing the infant and invite him/her to play a little game with you. Hold the toy 12–18 inches from the infant and move it in a playful manner. Describe the toy’s movements and the infant’s reactions. Example: “Cici, you are smiling and watching our toy frog hop around. Hop, hop, hop! You are waving your hands.”*]

ACT: [*While the infant is looking, put the toy within reaching distance of the infant and then put the cloth over the toy. Explain what happened. Example: “Frog is under the cloth.” Point to the cloth.*

Invite the infant to find the frog. Use gestures and facial expressions with your words. Example: “Where is our frog? Can you find our frog?”

If the infant seems uncertain about the toy’s location or does not remove the cloth, lift the edge of the cloth to show part of the toy. Wait a moment and ask, “Is our frog under the cloth?”

Show excitement at finding the hidden toy. Repeat the game if the infant shows interest.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened. Example: “We played a game with a toy frog. Our frog found a place to hide. You knew frog was under the cloth and you found it!”*]

What to Look For—Option 2

The activity option supports development of the infant’s awareness of an object existing when it is out of sight (object permanence). There are prior activity plans related to this concept in Blocks 3, 8, 11, and 14. This concept generally begins to develop at about five months of age, but timing varies across infants. If an infant does not react when the toy is out of sight in this activity, you may wish to play a *Peek-a-boo* game with your face and the cloth. Because object permanence develops gradually, there is no reason to repeat the hiding and uncovering process multiple times in this activity unless the infant shows interest in repetitions. Uncovering the toy will be an exciting action for many infants and some may want to repeat the activity right away.

Option 2 continued More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Remove the cloth from the hidden toy if the infant does not do so after you show part of the toy. Repeat the movement of the toy and then hide it again under the cloth while the infant is watching. Encourage the infant to remove the cloth.

Enrichment ■ Invite the infant to both cover and uncover the toy.



Birth–12 Months

Option 3 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Problem-solving

An older infant searches for a toy hidden in a tube.



Key Concepts

Watch

Inside



Materials Needed

Small toy car

Mailing tube (see Be Prepared)



Also Promotes

Communication/Language

Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: Cut the mailing tube to serve as a tunnel for the small toy car. As an alternative to a tube, use a narrow box with ends cut out.

Sit on the floor with a mobile infant and invite him/her to join you in playing with a pretend tunnel. Show the tube and explain it is a tunnel. Place the tube in front of the infant so the infant sees its long side. (Neither tube end is facing the infant.) Then show the toy car. Roll the car into the tube while the infant is watching. Pause for the infant to react. If the infant offers no nonverbal or verbal response to the car's disappearance, ask "Where is our car?" with appropriate gestures and facial expression. If the infant does not begin to look for the toy car, tip the tube so part of the toy is exposed.

The infant may crawl to or pick up the tube in order to look into the opening. Picking up the tube may be especially exciting to the infant because lifting the tube will cause the car to roll out. Encourage the infant to roll the car into the tunnel and find it again. Describe the infant's actions in watching you move the toy and in finding the toy inside the tunnel. Allow ample time for the infant to explore the tube and car.

What to Look For—Option 3

Generally, infants will be pleased to see the car reappear! Many infants at this age will understand the toy is inside the tube, but it is important to provide extra supports if it seems the infant is uncertain about the toy's location. Repeat the game if the infant remains interested, keeping in mind that infants enjoy finding hidden objects when they are in the same location each time. In addition to promoting object permanence, the activity's use of a tube and toy with wheels supports an infant's exploration of how physical events occur.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If the infant does not search for the toy car, it may indicate he/she did not see the toy go in the tube. Repeat your actions with the toy car and tube, making sure the infant is watching.

Enrichment ■ Place a box or screen between the tube and the infant. Roll the toy car behind the screen rather than into the tube. Describe the infant's reaction and search.

 Interest Area

Materials Needed: toys, red or black shapes, white card stock, newspaper, small basket or dish, cloth, toy rubber ducks, 5–6 baskets

Make arrangements of 2–3 novel toys each day for infants to see from the floor during tummy time. Example: Three red toys side by side.

Fasten red or black paper shapes to white card stock and attach to the wall for all infants to see when held or carried by a caregiver.

Crinkle a sheet of newsprint paper into a dome shape and place it over a toy for infants to discover. On another day, cover a toy with a small basket or unbreakable dish for discovery.

To support the development of object permanence among infants who can move independently, make a game of finding hidden rubber ducks using five or six baskets, with one toy duck under each. Vary the game with different materials.

 Family Child Care

Materials Needed: variety of toys and household items: food cartons, small boxes and other containers, tubes, squares of felt, small cars and trucks, 3 colored gift bags, and like objects

In addition to supporting the development of object permanence with Options 2 and 3, provide a variety of toys and household items, such as food cartons, small boxes, and other containers. Demonstrate placing objects inside or under containers and taking them out again.

Offer a variation of Option 3 for toddlers and preschool-age children by placing tubes and squares of felt in the building area with small cars and trucks. Cut the ends from shoeboxes that children may use for tunnels. Also, place an interesting toy in one of three colored gift bags and encourage a toddler to find the toy. Repeat the game, each time hiding the toy in the middle bag.

Preschool-age children will enjoy finding a small object you hide under one of three containers. Consistently hide the toy under the same container and encourage a child to search. It will not take long for the children to discover the secret of the game!



Birth–12 Months

Option 1 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Self-control

A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating experience with a nursery rhyme.



Key Concepts

Calm



Materials Needed

None



Also Promotes

Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the words and tune of the “Itsy Bitsy Spider” nursery rhyme. Sources are available online. Corresponding finger actions are suggested below.

BEGIN: [*Hold the infant in your arms with his/her head well supported in the bend of your arm, ensuring the infant can clearly see you.*]

ACT: Are you ready for a fun song?

[*Pause and acknowledge the infant’s response while smiling and making eye contact. Example: “You are looking at me! I think you are interested in a song.”*]

Sing “Itsy Bitsy Spider” while offering light touches that correspond with the words of the song. Below are suggested finger actions:

- *Spider goes up—Walk your fingers gently from the infant’s hand toward his/her shoulder.*
- *Spider washed out—Move infant’s arm slightly out from body.*
- *Sun comes out—Raise infant’s arm slightly.*
- *Spider goes up—Walk your fingers back up the infant’s arm.*

Watch the infant’s reactions to the song closely. Use gentle touches and avoid tickling. Stop the activity if the infant turns away or appears at all distressed. Some infants may signal for you to repeat the song.

Talk with the infant about his/her reactions. Examples: “You have a big smile! You like our song. I will sing it again!” “You made a sad face. I stopped the song. Let’s find a way to feel calm and happy.”

At the conclusion of the song, reposition the infant to provide a clear signal that our song is over. Announce that our song is done and it is time to calm down. Example: “Our song is all done. We can calm down now.” Hold the infant and provide comfort, such as patting on the back, quietly singing a familiar song, or offering soft-voice reminders that it is time to rest.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you describe what happened. Example: “We had fun with the “Itsy Bitsy Spider” song, Camila! You laughed and had a big smile. Then we stopped so we could get calm again.”]*]



Birth–12 Months

Option 2 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Self-control

An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating experience with a nursery rhyme.



Key Concepts

Song
Calm



Materials Needed

None



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who is mobile or becoming mobile and can sit independently or with support. Be familiar with the words and tune of the “Itsy Bitsy Spider” nursery rhyme. Sources are available online. Corresponding finger actions are suggested below.

Invite an infant to sit with you on the floor for a special song. Sit facing the infant with a smile and tell about your plan. Example: “I am going to sing the “Itsy Bitsy Spider” song. My fingers are a pretend spider that can walk up your arm! Is it okay if my fingers pretend to walk up your arm?” Walk two fingers for several steps on the infant’s arm as an example of what you are asking. If the infant shows distress, explain that you can sing the song by moving your fingers in the air and not on the infant. Demonstrate walking several fingers in the air. If the infant continues to show distress about finger movements, sing the song without finger actions. Stop the activity if your singing seems stressful for the infant.

Sing the song and gently walk your fingers up the infant’s arm. Use a light touch and avoid tickling or startling the infant. See Option 1 for suggested finger actions. At the conclusion of the song, describe the infant’s reactions. Example: “You had fun with our song today, Cameron. You smiled and laughed when the spider walked up your arm.” Then announce that our song is done and it is time to calm down. Example: “Our song is all done. We can calm down now.” Invite the infant to sit near you to rest. The infant may want to sit next to you or on your lap. Provide quiet time for the infant to calm him/herself. If needed, support the infant by patting his/her back, quietly humming or singing a favorite song, or offering gentle reminders that it is time to rest. Acknowledge the infant’s behavior as he/she becomes calm after the activity. Example: “We had fun with the “Itsy Bitsy Spider” song. Now we are resting. We are feeling calm.”

👁️ What to Look For—Options 1–2

Most infants will enjoy the gentle touches that accompany this familiar song. An infant may signal that he/she would like you to repeat the song by smiling and making eye contact with you, kicking his/her legs, cooing, or laughing aloud. It is important to also watch closely for indications of disinterest or distress during the activity. Some infants may not like the feeling of your fingers or your movement of their arm. Option 2 suggests that you ask the infant whether it is okay for your fingers to walk on his/her arm. Most infants will not understand the words of your question, but your finger-walking demonstration, gestures, and facial expressions hopefully communicate the general idea of what could happen. Watch carefully for signs of distress, as suggested in the plans.



Your most important role in the activity is to help the infant calm him/herself. Adjust your calming-down supports in response to the infant's ease or difficulty in calming down. Give the infant a few moments of quiet time to respond to a strategy, such as your announcement it is time to calm down, before offering additional help. An older infant may move toward a calm state when you indicate the song is over.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ An infant who is new to finger plays may be more comfortable with a slower introduction to the finger actions. Begin using your finger in the air to demonstrate the song's actions prior to touching the infant. Moving your fingers in the air without touching the infant offers less stimulation and an opportunity for the infant to see what the spider in the song is doing. Note this is a strategy in Option 2.

Enrichment ■ If the infant is familiar with the song, encourage him/her to participate in some simple actions. The infant may enjoy raising his/her hands when the spider goes up and lowering them to the ground when the rain comes.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: none

During floor play, engage infants in nursery rhymes that involve simple motions, such as “Hickory Dickory Dock.” Recite one verse of the rhyme, using light touches as the mouse runs up the clock and then back down. This rhyme activity may be enjoyed by two infants at a time, using one hand for each infant. Infants will likely enjoy participating in the rhyme with a peer, and may enjoy watching one another's reactions to the motions. Encourage the infants to calm down after the exciting activity using one or more of the strategies suggested in the activity options.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

Invite all the children in your care to participate in the “Itsy Bitsy Spider” finger play. Sing the song slowly and explicitly demonstrate the corresponding movements. Older children who are familiar with the rhyme might wish to demonstrate the motions. Toddlers will enjoy watching their older peers and may imitate some of the simple movements. Before moving to the next activity, encourage all children to rest and sit quietly for a few moments.



Birth–12 Months

Option 1 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Social interaction skills

A young infant participates with a caregiver in responsive interactions focused on a song and movement.



Key Concepts

Song



Materials Needed

None



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Physical/Health

BEGIN: [*Hold the infant in your arms with his/her head well supported in the bend of your arm, ensuring the infant can clearly see you. Smile and greet the infant. Example: "Hello, Zion! I am happy to see you today."*]

ACT: [*Explain that you want to sing a song and move your body a little bit. Example: "I am going to sing a song and we are going to move a little bit. I can stop singing or moving my body if you don't like it."*]

Softly sing a verse of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Gently sway from side to side with the infant in your arms as you sing. Maintain eye contact with the infant throughout the song and movement.

Pause after the verse and describe the infant's reaction to the song and movement. Example: "You watched and listened to me sing a song. I think you liked listening to my voice and moving from side to side."

If the infant remains interested, repeat the song several times, pausing in between each verse to describe the infant's reactions.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of what happened during the activity. Example: "Thank you for sharing time with me, Zion. I sang a song and we moved together. You smiled while we moved to the song! We had fun together."*]



Birth–12 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Social interaction skills

Older infants participate in responsive interactions with a caregiver while dancing together.



Key Concepts

Music
Dance



Materials Needed

Music player with lively music



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite several infants who can sit independently, or stand, to dance with you. Infants who stand may wish to hold onto a piece of furniture. Play lively music, loud enough to be heard by the infants but soft enough to avoid overstimulating infants in the gathering. Demonstrate dancing to the music by moving parts of your upper body in gentle ways and occasionally moving your feet. Encourage infants to join you in dancing. Smile and make eye contact with infants as you dance together. Copy a brief part of what each infant does. This may be a slight movement of the head, a hand that goes in circles, or an arm that sways. Point out your mimicking actions. Examples: “I am dancing like Kylie is dancing.” “I am moving my arm the way Harper is moving her arm.” After several minutes, stop the music and describe what happened. Example: “We danced to the music! Luna danced. Marco danced. James smiled and watched the dancing. We had fun dancing together!”

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Watch for and use opportunities to incorporate responsive interactions with infants. In Option 1, responsiveness can occur when you stop after the first verse to describe the infant’s actions during the rhyme and determine whether to continue. In Option 2, responsiveness can occur when you copy part of what each infant is doing. The infant’s action may be quite modest in adult eyes, yet, from the infant’s point of view, having a trusted caregiver also do the action can be a meaningful experience in feeling acknowledged. In both options, maintaining eye contact and offering many big smiles is a practical way to communicate you are tuned in. Some infants in Option 2 may prefer to listen to the music and watch their peers’ movements. Positively recognize all forms of participation. Remember that responsive interactions are wrapped around what an infant is doing, not around an interest in entertaining or directing what an infant might do.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Offer Option 1 without swaying your body if it seems the infant likes the music but not the movement. ■ If it is too challenging for infants to dance in close proximity in Option 2, offer the activity in a one-to-one setting. ■ Offer supports for calming down after Option 2 (see Self-Regulation activity plan in this block and others).

Enrichment ■ If an infant seems interested in another round of song and movement in Option 1, offer a different nursery rhyme/song that can be used with gentle swaying of your body, such as “I’m a Little Teapot” or “Jack and Jill.”



Interest Area

Materials Needed: none

Offer singing and simple made-up rhymes throughout the day in response to an infant's actions, including looking at you. Your own voice is much easier to use and far more spontaneous than recorded music for responding to an infant's interests and actions. Examples: "Jamie, I see you looking at me. I'm going to sing a song for you!" "Desari, you are making sounds with a rattle. I am going to make up a rattle rhyme!" Your song or rhyme can be simple and short, and even include nonsense words. What is most important is your responsiveness to what an infant is doing.



Family Child Care

Materials Needed: music player with different music styles

Dancing is an enjoyable activity for children of all ages. Offer opportunities for children in your setting to dance with different styles and tempos of music. Encourage toddlers and older children to dance in ways they choose. Older infants will enjoy listening to the music and moving their bodies while watching their older peers. Younger infants will enjoy being held during dance times.



Birth–12 Months

Option 1 One-to-One



Skill and Goal Fine motor development

A young infant practices eye-hand coordination while holding one or two toys.



Key Concepts

Reach
Hold



Materials Needed

2 small soft toys (see Be Prepared)



Also Promotes

Cognitive
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This activity is for a nonmobile infant who is learning to grasp small items with one or two hands. Select small toys that will be of interest to the infant. Toys with faces are often appealing to infants.

Place the infant on his/her back when fully alert and ready to play. Talk with the infant to help him/her feel comfortable. Then place an appealing toy about 12 inches from the infant. Hold the toy steady for several seconds and then move it gently from side to side or in a small circle to attract the infant's attention to the toy. Describe what you are doing. Then move the toy closer to the infant so it is within easy reach. Encourage the infant to reach for and hold the toy. Avoid putting the toy in the infant's hand.

If the infant is using one hand to hold the toy, offer a second toy to the infant. The infant may let go of the toy he/she is holding to grasp the second toy, or hold the second toy with his/her other available hand, so he/she is holding one toy in each hand.

Enthusiastically describe the infant's actions with the toys. Examples: "Wow, Sophie, you are using both of your hands to hold a toy!" "Wow, James, you are holding two toys! You have a toy in each hand!" Point to what you describe. Example: "You have a toy in this hand. And you have a toy in your other hand!"





Birth–12 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Fine motor development

Older infants practice coordinating the use of two hands while shaking rattles.



Key Concepts

Shake



Materials Needed

Rattles—1–2 per infant and caregiver
Basket



Also Promotes

Cognitive
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who can sit independently or with support. The activity goal of helping infants coordinate the use of two hands in holding an object can be done with an infant holding one rattle with both hands or holding one rattle in each hand. The rattles do not need to be identical. You may wish to include several ball-shaped rattles that prompt use of two hands. Place the rattles in the basket.

Invite 2–3 infants to join you in sitting on the floor to have fun shaking some rattles. Offer the basket of rattles to each infant. Invite each infant to take a rattle from the basket rather than handing a rattle to each infant. The intent is to support reaching and grasping skills. Sit close to the infants and encourage them to shake their rattles. Shake your own rattle gently and use your facial expressions to show enthusiasm.

If an infant is using one hand to hold a rattle, offer a second rattle so the infant has one rattle in each hand.

Describe each infant's actions. Emphasize that we are making sounds by shaking our rattles. You may wish to make up a simple rhyme or song about shaking our rattles and making sounds.



Birth–12 Months

Option 3 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Fine motor development

Older infants practice bringing both hands together by clapping.



Key Concepts

Clap



Materials Needed

None



Also Promotes

Cognitive

Communication/Language

Revised: 6/30/2023

Be Prepared: This activity is for mobile infants who can sit independently. Memorize the “Open, Shut Them” rhyme and hand motions as offered below.

Sit on the floor facing several infants. Invite the infants to join you in clapping our hands together. Demonstrate clapping your hands. Encourage the infants to clap their hands with you. Then recite with hand motions the “Open, Shut Them” rhyme. Emphasize clapping your hands and invite infants to clap with you. Maintain eye contact with the infants to support their engagement. Emphasize each word and speak slowly and enthusiastically. Repeat the rhyme and encourage clapping. Infants are not expected to imitate each movement or to say the rhyme. Describe each infant’s actions. Use gestures. Example: “Hosea, your hands are so close together. You are almost clapping your hands!”

Open, Shut Them

Suggested Caregiver Motions

Open, shut them.

[put open hands apart and then together]

Open, shut them.

[put open hands apart and then together]

Give a little clap.

[gently clap hands]

Open, shut them.

[put open hands apart and then together]

Open, shut them.

[put open hands apart and then together]

Put them in your lap.

[place open hands in your lap]

👁️ What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each activity option offers an opportunity for an infant to use both hands. Toys are a means to this end. Coordinating the use of both hands at the same time takes time to develop, and infants will differ in their readiness to use both hands. In Options 1 and 2, some infants may be more interested in their own hands than in the toy. It is alright to let the infant set the course of the activity. Talk about what the infant is doing with his/her hands.

Infants generally begin to reach for an object with both hands at the same time—about 4–5 months of age—but there will be differences among infants in Options 2 and 3. In addition to the eye-hand coordination tasks of Option 2, there is the opportunity for infants to strengthen their awareness of the cause-effect arrangement of shaking a rattle and hearing a sound.

Option 3 supports the eye-hand coordination of bringing both hands





together at the midline. Some infants will engage in clapping and prefer to watch you do the other movements. Repeat parts of the rhyme that seem to be of interest to infants. Example: "You liked putting your hands in your lap. Let's do it again." Demonstrate while saying, 'Put them in your lap!'

The infant's enjoyment is an important part of each activity. Learning is strengthened in overlapping ways when you and an infant are engaged in a fun activity that is rich with words and action. Some infants may begin to babble to express delight.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ In Option 1, lightly touch the toy to an infant's hand if he/she does not readily grasp the toy. ■ In Option 3, if infants show early signs of interest in putting their open hands together for a clap, slowly repeat the first part of the rhyme (Open, shut them. Open, shut them.) with an accentuated and supportive demonstration of the corresponding hand motions.

Enrichment ■ If available at your center, offer infants in Option 2 a clear shaker with beads inside so infants can see what happens when they shake a rattle. ■ Vary the tempo of rattle shaking in Option 2. You also may wish to reach high, reach low, and reach to the side. ■ In Option 3, extend the single "clap" to 2–3 claps, such as "clap, clap, clap!" ■ In Option 3, if infants readily separate and then put together their open hands in the first part of the rhyme, demonstrate and describe a different way to "Open, shut them": open and close each hand simultaneously. ■ In Option 3, encourage infants to clap their hands at the end of the activity to recognize their hard work.



Interest Area

Materials Needed: baby gym with toys, cloth-covered sound makers, small toys, books

For short periods of time, young infants may enjoy watching and reaching for toys suspended from a baby gym. Infants who can move around by creeping on their tummies or crawling on hands and knees will enjoy a variety of simple toys to hold and manipulate, such as cloth-covered sound makers. Walking infants will enjoy carrying small objects and manipulating toys on a low surface that allows for standing. Display familiar books, especially board books, for older infants to look at and hold.



Family Child Care

Materials Needed: star builders, bristle blocks, large paper and crayons

Support the eye-hand coordination skills of toddlers by providing star builders to take apart. Preschool-age children will benefit from access to a variety of manipulative materials, such as bristle blocks that require coordinated action with two hands. Encourage toddlers and older children to reach across their midline by providing large paper rolled out onto the floor and crayons (rather than markers). Encourage scribbling.