



**Communication/  
Language**

**Exploring Sounds**

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on quiet and loud sounds.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers participate in a guided tour of the room to identify and talk about spaces and items that are loud, and spaces and items that are quiet.



**Cognitive**

**Solving Problems**

- Option 1** (OO) A toddler takes small toys of interest out of several small containers and places them in a larger container.
- Option 2** (OO) A toddler takes small toys of interest out of one large container and places them in two smaller containers.



**Self-Regulation**

**Getting Calm**

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers watch a caregiver calm down after pretending to row a boat.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers pretend to row a boat and then calm down with caregiver support.



**Social-Emotional**

**Exploring Feelings**

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on how a mama fox loves her little fox no matter what he does.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on a little fox's feelings in different situations.



**Physical/Health**

**Moving Our Bodies**

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers practice the coordinated use of both hands to explore sensory tubes.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers with good walking skills practice balance and concentration skills by holding a sensory tube with both hands while walking on a simple path.

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



## 12–24 Months

### Option 1 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal Awareness of sound

Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on quiet and loud sounds.



#### Key Concepts

Quiet  
Loud  
Sound



#### Materials Needed

*Quiet Loud* by Leslie Patricelli



Also Promotes  
Cognitive

**BEGIN:** [Invite toddlers to join you in reading a book about quiet and loud sounds.

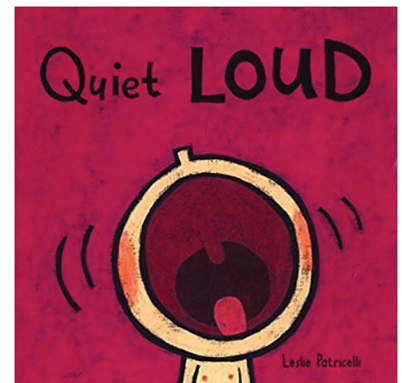
Use a loud voice for the first sentence below. Use a quieter voice for the second sentence below. Accentuate the words loud and quiet.]

**EXPLAIN:** Some sounds are loud. Some sounds are quiet. Our book tells us about both loud and quiet sounds.

[Display book cover. Point to face, mouth, and tongue when you name each.]

**ASK:** The cover of our book shows a child's face. Here is the child's mouth. Here is the tongue inside the child's mouth.

- Do you think this person is using a quiet voice or a loud voice?
- Why? (mouth is open wide)



Our mouth gets bigger when we talk loud. Our mouth is smaller when we talk quietly.

**ACT:** [Use the following strategies to share the book:

- Add your own words to the book text to describe each illustration.
- Where possible, connect the book's quiet or loud items to a corresponding part of your room's day. Examples: Being quiet at bedtime is similar to being quiet during rest time in our room. Being loud during play time is similar to being loud during outdoor time.
- Demonstrate whispering and screaming when these are presented in the book. Point out your mouth is open wider when you scream and smaller when you whisper. Show again the book cover as a reminder of the earlier discussion of our mouth making loud and quiet sounds.
- Point to the words quiet and loud on each page in addition to aspects of illustrations that may need description.

**Option 1 continued**

- *If time and toddler interest permit, point to and briefly discuss selected quiet and loud items shown on the final pages. Focus on items that are likely familiar to toddlers, such as a cloud, pillow, plant, fire engine, burp (probably humorous), and drum.]*

**RECAP:** Some of the sounds we make are quiet, and some of the sounds we make are loud. Some of the things in our room and where we live are quiet, and other things are loud. Let's all use a loud voice to say loud. Now let's all use a quiet voice to say quiet.

**👁️ What to Look For—Option 1**

Toddlers are no doubt familiar with the concepts of loud and quiet. But this book sharing may be a new experience for toddlers in considering whether a range of different sounds people and things make are quiet or loud. The book's pairing of quiet and loud sounds can help strengthen toddlers' awareness of volume differences. Watch toddlers' expressions carefully to determine whether some of the illustrated sources of sounds need explanation, as suggested in Extra Support tips. The book's illustrations are bold and engaging, but some images may be unclear to toddlers who have limited or no familiarity with the item.

Pointing to the words quiet and loud indirectly supports toddlers' awareness of how print is different than a picture. This early awareness sets the stage for later understanding of how print works, a critically important literacy skill. Look for toddler interest in the book's use of print, as suggested in an Enrichment tip.

**📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

**Extra support** ■ For the illustration of a tortoise, explain that a tortoise is also called a turtle. ■ For the illustration of thinking, point to your head and explain that thinking happens inside of our head. Encourage toddlers to point to their heads, too. Example: "Let's all point to where thinking happens in our body."

**Enrichment** ■ Point out a print difference on the cover and other pages: The word LOUD is bigger than the word Quiet in our book. ■ Our book says singing is loud. Can we also sing quietly?

## 12–24 Months

### Option 2 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal Awareness of sound

Toddlers participate in a guided tour of the room to identify and talk about spaces and items that are loud, and spaces and items that are quiet.



#### Key Concepts

Quiet  
Loud  
Sound



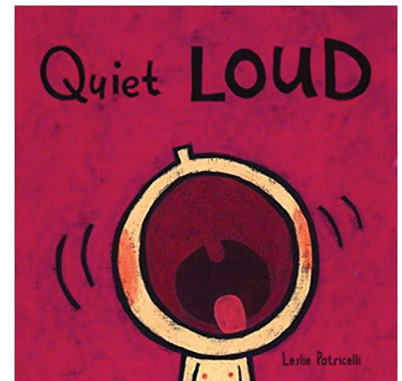
#### Materials Needed

*Quiet Loud* by Leslie Patricelli



#### Also Promotes Cognitive

This activity is a follow-up to Option 1, designed for use later in the day or 1–2 days after the book is shared in Option 1. For logistical reasons, involve 4–5 toddlers at a time in this activity. Open the session by showing the cover of the book and reminding toddlers that some things have a loud sound and other things have a quiet sound. You may wish to review several of the illustrated items in the book. Then explain that we will walk around our room. We can talk about whether different spaces and things in our room are usually quiet or loud.



Stop to discuss items and spaces that you point to and name. Examples: crayons, easel, plant, computer, playground, blocks area, housekeeping area, books. Ask toddlers whether the item (or space) is quiet or loud when we use it. Encourage toddlers to talk about how or why the item or space is quiet or loud. Examples: “This is our playground. Do we hear quiet or loud sounds when we are outside (or: when we use \_\_\_\_\_)?” “Why do we hear loud sounds?”

Use toddlers’ engagement in the activity to determine the length of your room tour. Conclude the activity with a brief reminder of what you looked at. Organize the summary by naming (and inviting toddlers to help name) items and spaces that are loud, and then items and spaces that are quiet, rather than the order in which you looked at items and spaces.

### What to Look For—Option 2

Watch for possible “aha” moments in toddlers’ discussion of items and spaces that have no apparent sound, such as a plant, or no sound until they are used, such as a computer. There may be opportunities to engage toddlers in discussions that can refine their thinking about sound, including when sound can be heard in a space or from an item. Below are some examples of ideas that might emerge in toddlers’ exploration of items in your room:

- A playground is loud only when we use it.
- A crayon does not have a sound and is quiet when it is used.
- The sound of a drum can be quiet or loud depending on how hard we tap it.

These types of insights are the intent of the suggested question on how or why an item or space is quiet or loud. Also, you help set the stage for a closer look at loud and quiet sounds with the items and spaces you select to discuss.

**Option 2 continued**

Toddlers will differ in their readiness to pursue more in-depth thinking about the broad categories of quiet and loud. Positively recognize different responses to the activity.

 **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2**

**Extra support** ■ Emphasize that quiet and loud are sounds we hear. Point to your ears when you mention hearing. The suggested question of toddlers during your tour—Do we hear quiet or loud sounds when...—supports the idea that sound is something we hear.

**Enrichment** ■ Bring the *Quiet Loud* book with you so you can point to pictures of items you select to talk about in your room. Examples: plant, drum, pillow. It is cognitively helpful for toddlers to connect a picture of an item to a similar actual object.

**Interest Area**

**Materials Needed:** items that produce sound—such as bells, shakers, toy drum

Support toddlers' awareness of how we can make louder and quieter sounds by providing items that can produce louder and quieter sounds—such as bells, shakers, and a toy drum. Invite toddlers to make several quiet and then several loud sounds with the same item. Offer demonstrations, if necessary. Encourage toddlers to tell how they make quiet and loud sounds with an item.

**Family Child Care**

**Materials Needed:** see activity description

Preschool-age children may enjoy the Option 2 and Interest Area activities. A preschool-age child could help show how items make or do not make a sound when used (Option 2); and how they make louder or quieter sounds when used in different ways (Interest Area).



## 12–24 Months

Option 1  
One-to-OneSkill and Goal  
Problem-solving

A toddler takes small toys of interest out of several small containers and places them in a larger container.



## Key Concepts

Out  
In



## Materials Needed

2–3 small containers (see Be Prepared)  
Large container (see Be Prepared)  
Small toys (see Be Prepared)



## Also Promotes

Physical/Health

**Be Prepared:** Secure 2–3 small containers with easy-to-use lids and fill each with two types of small toys of interest to the toddler who will participate in this activity, one type per container. Examples: animal figures, people figures, artificial flowers and leaves, jumbo beads, jumbo counters. Affix the lids. Secure a large container with an easy-to-use lid that will hold all of the small items you put in the smaller containers. Leave the large container empty, but affix the lid. Create a pretend reason for moving the items from a smaller to a larger container, such as the following: “There are flowers in one small cup and leaves in another small cup. Will you help me put our leaves and flowers together in one larger box?”

**BEGIN:** [*Invite a toddler to help you put things into a larger box. Offer a reason related to the items. See Be Prepared for an example.*]

**EXPLAIN:** [*Put the 2–3 small containers in front of the toddler on a low table. Describe what is in each of the containers, but do not remove their lids. Then put the larger container on the table, also with its lid on, and invite the toddler to take the items out of the small containers and put them in the larger container.*]

**ACT:** [*Pause for the toddler to think about the request and respond. If the toddler does not remove the lid(s) from one or more small containers, ask whether he/she would like to take off a lid and look at what’s inside. Offer verbal guidance for removing a lid, if necessary.*

*Express enthusiasm for the contents of the smaller containers when they are revealed. Example: “Look at all of the flowers, Adrianna! You like flowers. This is going to be fun!”*

*Point to the large container. Remind the toddler that the things in the small containers will go into this large container. Pause for the toddler to decide what to do. He/she may remove the lid from the large container or may prefer to first put the small items on the table. Leave this decision to the toddler.*

*Encourage the toddler to remove items from each small container, one item at a time. Describe the toddler’s actions and continue to express enthusiasm for the items the toddler is removing. Example: “These are really pretty flowers. You are working hard to take out each flower with your fingers.”*

*If the toddler put items on the table, remind him/her that we want to put them in the large container. Point to what you describe. Provide verbal guidance, if necessary, for removing the lid. If the toddler put items directly into the large container, encourage the toddler to put the lid on the larger container so our things do not fall out.*

**Option 1 continued**

*Encourage the toddler to put the lids on each of the small containers so the lids do not get lost.*

*If the toddler remains interested, invite him/her to put the small containers in a place you designate. Also invite the toddler to help you carry the large container to a location of your designation.]*

**RECAP:** *[Briefly describe what happened. Thank the toddler for helping you move the items.]*

 **What to Look For—Option 1**

There are several problems for a toddler to solve in this activity, including the following:

- how to take off lids,
- whether to put the small items directly in the large container or to first put them on the table,
- where to put the items in the larger container, and
- how to affix lids to the containers.

The first and fourth problems involve spatial skills. The second problem pertains to planning and a toddler's level of interest in looking closely at the small items, which is easier to do when placed on the table than when placed in the large container. The third item is a problem for toddlers who have an interest in sorting, but is unlikely to be of interest to many toddlers.

Look for ways to support the toddler's role as a problem-solver in this activity and resist temptations to suggest solutions before the toddler has adequate time to consider possibilities on his/her own.

Anticipate that some toddlers may opt to stop this multi-part activity at any point, including halfway through the task of removing small items from the small containers. Positively acknowledge different types of participation.

 **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

**Extra support** ■ Offer two, rather than three, small containers of items. ■ If a toddler dumps the small items from the small containers, gently encourage him/her to put items in the large container, one or two at a time. ■ In the early segment of the activity, you may wish to take turns with the toddler in taking items out of the small container. This may serve as a demonstration and bridge to the toddler's independent actions.

**Enrichment** ■ Ask a toddler whether he/she wants to put the two types of items in different parts of the large container. Example: A toddler may decide to put flowers on one end and leaves on the other end. Again, encourage a toddler to take the lead on item placement.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 2 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

##### Problem-solving

A toddler takes small toys of interest out of one large container and places them in two smaller containers.



#### Key Concepts

In  
Out



#### Materials Needed

2 small containers (see Be Prepared)  
Large container (see Be Prepared)  
Small toys (see Be Prepared)



#### Also Promotes

Physical/Health

**Be Prepared:** Secure a large container with an easy-to-use lid. Also secure two types of small toys of interest to the toddler who will participate in this activity. Examples: animal figures, people figures, artificial flowers and leaves, jumbo beads, jumbo counters. Gather 5–8 toys of each type. Put the items in the large container in a random arrangement and affix the lid. Secure two small containers with easy-to-use lids. Leave the small containers empty but affix their lids.

Invite a toddler to help you take items out of a big container and put them in two smaller containers. Put the large container on a low table in front of the toddler. Tell what is inside the box but do not remove its lid. Explain that it will be easier to play with the items if they are in smaller containers. Put the two smaller containers on the table in front of the toddler. Point to each container as you explain they are empty.

Pause for the toddler to figure out how he/she wants to approach the task. If after several moments the toddler does not attempt to remove the lid(s), ask if he/she would like to take the lid off the large container and look at what is inside. Offer verbal guidance for removing the lid, if necessary. Show enthusiasm for the contents of the large container. Then remind the toddler that the items need to be put in the two smaller containers.

Support the toddler in how he/she wants to organize the items. The toddler may decide to put the items randomly in each of the two containers or sort the items by type or use some other approach. If the toddler looks to you for a decision, smile generously and tell the toddler he/she can put the items in the small containers however he/she wishes. Gently describe the toddler's actions, acknowledge his/her hard work, and continue to express excitement about the items the toddler is working with.

If the toddler remains interested, encourage him/her to put lids in each of the three containers and help you carry the containers to a place you designate. Conclude the activity by briefly describing the toddler's actions and thank him/her for helping.

### What to Look For—Option 2

This activity is a reverse of Option 2, with similar types of potential problems the toddler can address (see What to Look For in Option 1). The current activity offers the additional potential problem of how to separate a larger collection of toys that represent two different types. Some toddlers may promptly decide to sort the items, such as one type per small container, whereas other toddlers may show no interest in sorting and will put items in the two smaller containers in random fashion. Toddlers are not expected to learn counting and it is not necessary or appropriate for the two smaller containers to have equal or nearly equal numbers of items. Support each toddler's lead with the tasks



**Option 2 continued**

and positively recognize different types of participation. Consistent with Option 1, a toddler may opt to depart from the activity before all items have been removed from the large container.

 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

**Extra support** ■ Put a smaller number of toys in the large container. ■ Offer to help the toddler take toys out of the large container and put them in the smaller containers if a demonstration or a collaborative arrangement seems needed. Avoid imposing a decision on how to separate the larger collection of toys. If at all possible, go with the toddler's idea. Describe the toddler's actions and your actions with the toys.

**Enrichment** ■ Add a sorting task if the toddler does not introduce one, by requesting the toddler put one type of item in one small container and the other type of item in the other small container.



## Interest Area

**Materials Needed:** 10–15 different toy food items, large basket or container, three smaller containers

Offer an extension of the Option 2 activity by putting the toy food items in a large basket and inviting several toddlers to put the food in smaller containers for three different friends (one container per friend). Support toddlers in dividing the food in ways they wish. Example: one toddler may want to put together a container of foods he/she thinks a friend would like and another toddler may try to put one of each type of food in each container (“everyone gets an apple!”). Monitor potential conflicts over food items and encourage sharing and flexibility. Encourage toddlers to tell about their plans and what they are doing.



## Family Child Care

**Materials Needed:** See Option 2

Offer Option 2 to a preschool-age child with the request to sort the small toys into the two smaller containers (Enrichment tip). Also, a preschool-age or older child could help you organize materials for Options 1 and 2 for toddlers.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 1 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal Self-control

Toddlers watch a caregiver calm down after pretending to row a boat.



#### Key Concepts

Row  
Rowboat  
Stream  
Calm down



#### Materials Needed

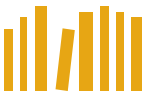
\*Picture of rowboat



#### Also Promotes

Communication/Language  
Physical/Health

\*Printables provided



#### Optional Reading

*Row, Row, Row Your Boat* by  
Annie Kubler

**Be Prepared:** Be familiar with the first verse of the song “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”

**BEGIN:** *[Invite several toddlers to join you for a song about a boat.]*

*Display provided picture of a rowboat and point to the person in the boat when you describe how the boat moves.]*



This is a picture of a rowboat. The person in the boat is rowing the boat. We make a rowboat move on water by rowing the boat.

Our body moves back and forth when we row a boat. I’m going to pretend I am rowing a boat. Watch how I row my pretend rowboat!

**ACT:** *[Pretend to row a boat while sitting. Use exaggerated circle movements of your arms, as if you are moving the oars of the boat.]*

I am rowing my pretend rowboat. My arms are working hard to move the boat in the water.

I am going to sing a song about rowing a boat down a stream. A stream has water. A stream is like a river.

*[Enthusiastically sing the song while pretending to row the boat with large circle movements of your arms. Move your arms with the beat of the song.]*

Would you like me to sing the boat song again?

*[Repeat the song and your rowing actions if toddlers respond positively.]*

**EXPLAIN:** I had fun pretending to row a boat! I feel excited. I also feel tired. Rowing a boat is hard work!

I am going to calm down. My body needs to rest after doing something that made me feel excited and tired.

Please watch how I calm my body.

*[Relax your arms and put your hands in your lap. Take several deep and slow breaths. Briefly close your eyes. Quietly hum “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” at a much slower pace than you sang it.]*



## ***Option 1 continued***

**RECAP:** I got excited and tired pretending to row a boat. I decided to calm down. I relaxed my arms, put my hands in my lap, closed my eyes a little bit, and hummed a song. Now I feel calm.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 2 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

##### Self-control

Toddlers pretend to row a boat and then calm down with caregiver support



#### Key Concepts

Row  
Rowboat  
Stream  
Calm down



#### Materials Needed

\*Picture of rowboat



#### Also Promotes

Communication/Language  
Physical/Health

\*Printables provided

**Be Prepared:** Be familiar with the first verse of the song “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”

Invite toddlers to join you to pretend we are rowing a boat. Show the provided picture of a rowboat and explain that we row a boat to make it move on water. We can pretend to row our boat down a stream of water. Explain that a stream is like a river.



Demonstrate rowing actions by moving your arms in exaggerated circles while sitting, as if you are rowing a boat. Invite toddlers to join you in moving their arms. After a brief period of practice rowing, lead toddlers in rowing our pretend boats while you energetically sing the first verse of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” Move your arms with the beat of the song.

Pause and tell toddlers you think it is fun to row a boat. Explain that we can row just a little farther down our pretend stream of water. Invite toddlers to join you in another round of pretend rowing as you make exaggerated rowing motions with your arms and again sing the first verse of the song. Encourage toddlers to say or sing the word “row” when you sing it (or as much of the song they would like to sing or say).

After a second round, ask toddlers if they think rowing is hard to do. Tell toddlers you are excited and tired. Explain that you are going to calm down your body. Invite toddlers to join in calming down, too. Describe and demonstrate the following steps:

- Relax your arms.
- Put your hands in your lap.
- Take several deep and slow breaths.
- Close your eyes briefly.
- Quietly hum “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” at a slow tempo.

Explain that your body feels calmer. Ask toddlers whether they feel calm.

### What to Look For—Options 1–2

Toddlers who have participated in prior ELM activities focused on calming down may not need the calming down demonstration offered in Option 1. Rowing a boat may be a new concept for many toddlers, however, and Option 1 may be the best way to describe and demonstrate rowing actions. Be careful about putting too much into Option 2. Some toddlers will enjoy contributing to the song in Option 2, although it is not necessary or appropriate to teach



the song or expect toddlers to learn it. The song is a way to promote modest stimulation that precedes calming-down practice.

### More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

**Extra support** ■ Offer a slower, quieter approach to the song and arm movements if you anticipate toddlers might get overstimulated. ■ In Option 2, sit next to a toddler who has difficulty managing his/her behaviors during the rowing and/or calming down segments. Offer quiet coaching on what to do.

**Enrichment** ■ When you show and describe the picture of a rowboat, point to and explain how the oar is used to row the boat. ■ In the repeat of the rowing actions and song in Option 2, vary the tempo of the song, first slow and then fast, and adjust your rowing actions with the tempo.



### Interest Area

**Materials Needed:** boat props—such as sailor or fishing hat, a box or large laundry basket to sit in as a pretend boat, blue fabric to represent water; beach props—such as beach towel, straw hat, sunglasses, soft music with ocean waves or other water nature sounds

Set up a lake or stream scene by placing the blanket on the floor and boat props in a box or basket. Set up a beach scene nearby by placing the beach props on a towel on the floor. Depending on the size of the box/basket, invite one or two toddlers to row the boat. Then invite toddlers to sit on the beach towel to calm their bodies. Offer soothing music with waves/water sounds, if possible.



### Family Child Care

**Materials Needed:** see Interest Area materials

Older toddlers and preschool-age children may enjoy participating in the Option 2 activity. Infants may enjoy being held and gently rocked during the song if another caregiver is available. Older toddlers and preschool-age children also may enjoy the Interest Area activity. Preschool-age children will have fun helping you set up the beach scene.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 1 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

##### Awareness of emotions

Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on how a mama fox loves her little fox no matter what he does.



#### Key Concepts

Love



#### Materials Needed

*I Love You Because You're You* by Liza Baker



#### Also Promotes

Communication/Language  
Cognitive

**BEGIN:** [*Invite several toddlers to read a book about being loved.*]

Our book is about a mama fox who loves her little fox.

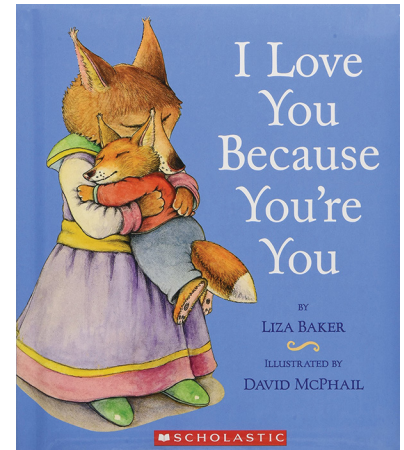
**ACT:** [*Show book cover. Point to the mama and little fox.*]

Here is Mama Fox. Here is her Little Fox. What are they doing? (hugging)

**EXPLAIN:** Mama Fox and Little Fox love each other! Let's find out more about the mama and little fox.

**ACT:** [*Use the following strategies to share the book:*

- *Use your own words to describe and explain what is happening on each page. Example: "The little fox is angry because his mama is making him get ready for bed. He wanted to keep playing!"*
- *Point to and describe parts of illustrations that help explain a situation, such as Little Fox standing behind his mama when he feels bashful.*
- *Describe words toddlers may not know that are central to understanding a picture—such as frightened, bashful, brave, curious, and proud.*
- *Acknowledge and build on toddlers' comments and pointing.*
- *Emphasize the book's theme that the mama always, always loved her little fox.*



**RECAP:** The little fox did lots of different things in our story. Did his mama ever stop loving him? (no!) The mama fox always loved her little fox.

**Option 1 continued****👁️ What to Look For—Option 1**

Monitor toddlers' reactions to your words and the pictures to determine whether to provide more description or explanation of a situation or feeling. Most toddlers will understand many of the little fox's behaviors, such as standing on his head and being sick. Most toddlers will understand many of the little fox's emotions, like feeling happy, sad, and angry. They likely have experienced feeling frightened, bashful, brave, proud, and curious, but may be unfamiliar with the words that describe these feelings. The goal is not to introduce a wide range of feeling words, but to help toddlers appreciate the bigger idea that Little Fox's mama loves him no matter what he does or what he feels.

**📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

**Extra support** ■ Point to and name or describe important features of each picture, such as Little Fox standing on his head and tears in his eyes when he is crying.

**Enrichment** ■ Point out some of Mama Fox's behaviors, such as holding her ears when Little Fox screams and shouts. But she never stops loving him!



## 12–24 Months

### Option 2 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal Awareness of emotions

Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on a little fox's feelings in different situations.



#### Key Concepts

Feelings



#### Materials Needed

*I Love You Because You're You* by Liza Baker

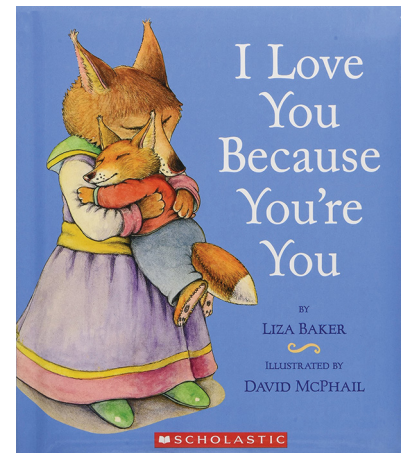


#### Also Promotes

Communication/Language  
Cognitive

This book sharing is designed as a follow-up to Option 1. The focus of the current session is situations in which Little Fox:

- (1) feels happy or good about himself—standing on his head, rolling on the rug, and finding a lost ball, and
- (2) feels sad, worried, or angry—frightened by a noise, bashful in a new situation, and crying because he does not want to do something.



Select situations in the book that you anticipate will be helpful for toddlers in your gathering to talk about, especially situations that you can easily help toddlers connect to their own experiences. Two or three situations of each of these two broad types of feelings will likely be sufficient for the session.

Use the following approach to talking about each situation:

- Remind toddlers what is happening in the picture.
- Talk with toddlers about what Little Fox is feeling and why, such as how Little Fox is feeling angry because he does not want to get ready for bed.
- Help toddlers connect the situation or Little Fox's feeling to their own experiences, such as a related event in your room. Example: "We heard a siren this week during snack time. The siren made us feel worried. We found out that no one was in trouble or danger. People made the siren go to make sure the siren was working."

Conclude the session by emphasizing that Little Fox had different types of feelings in different situations, and by reminding toddlers that Mama Fox loves Little Fox no matter what he did or how he felt.

### 👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

This option offers a closer look at what Little Fox might be feeling in different situations. As suggested in the activity description, select situations that you anticipate will be meaningful to toddlers in your gathering. Talking about similar situations in your room offers a shared context for discussion. Toddlers will likely be more aware of their similar situations and feelings than they are able to communicate verbally. Look for opportunities to connect with individual toddlers through eye contact, smiles, and other nonverbal means in response to their facial expressions, nods, gestures, or brief utterances.



**Option 2 continued** More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

**Extra support** ■ Point to specific aspects of illustrations when you describe and explain what is happening. Example: “The little fox is looking down the dark stairs. He is feeling scared because it is dark. His mama is close; she is keeping him safe.”

**Enrichment** ■ Invite toddlers to tell what is happening in a picture or why Little Fox may be feeling happy.

 Interest Area

**Materials Needed:** paper and crayons or markers

Draw toddlers’ attention to how Little Fox drew a picture (a valentine) for his mama in our story. Invite toddlers to draw something special for someone who loves them. Offer to add a toddler’s words to his/her picture.

 Family Child Care

**Materials Needed:** *I Love You Because You’re You* by Liza Baker

Invite preschool-age children to participate in Options 1 and 2 and in the Interest Area activity. Preschool-age children’s contributions to the discussion of similar situations or feelings in Option 2 may be particularly helpful.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 1 One-to-One



#### Skill and Goal

**Gross motor development**

**Fine motor development**

Toddlers practice the coordinated use of both hands to explore sensory tubes.



#### Key Concepts

Pull

Up

Hold

Move



#### Materials Needed

Sensory tubes—2 per toddler and caregiver (see Be Prepared)

Container to hold tubes upright



#### Also Promotes

Cognitive

Communication/Language

**Be Prepared:** Place the sensory tubes in a vertical position in the container. A sensory tube is easier for a toddler to grasp with two hands if it is upright (compared to lying on the floor). Designate a specific area, such as “our blue rug,” for the activity. Limit participation to two toddlers at a time so you can provide sufficient support for manipulation of the tubes.

**BEGIN:** [*Sit near the container of tubes and invite two toddlers to join you. Example: “Angel and Tiana, would you like to find out about our tubes? Come over to play.” Keep the tubes in their container so toddlers have the experience of removing them.*]

**ACT:** Our tubes are fun to hold and move and look at. You may get one out.



[*Encourage a toddler to use both hands to take a tube out of the container. Emphasize that we use our hands and arms to pull a tube up from the container. Demonstrate pulling a tube with both hands, if necessary. Describe your arm movement.*]

*Describe and demonstrate, if appropriate, how to use both hands to hold a tube. Encourage a toddler to grip his/her hands around a tube so it does not roll off a toddler’s hands. Invite toddlers to sit on the floor to look at their tube.*

*Support with your words each toddler’s interest in the colorful items locked inside a tube. Follow each toddler’s initial lead with a tube, such as shaking or rolling it on the floor. Describe sights and sounds a toddler is experiencing plus the toddler’s reactions or actions. Example: “Tiana, the bells in your tube made a sound when you rolled the tube. You smiled when the bells made a sound.”*

*If a toddler appears to be losing interest after exploring a tube with one approach only, such as consistently rolling it back and forth, you may wish to suggest another approach, such as shaking the tube.*

*Invite toddlers to pull a second tube from the container. Put their first tube selection in the container. Support toddlers’ exploration of a second tube through comments about what each toddler is doing and the tube’s sights and sounds. Describe the little toys and items inside a tube.*

*Offer a clear message about when time with the tubes will end. Example: “It is almost time to put our sensory tubes back into the*

**Option 1 continued**

*pail. We will all put the tubes away until tomorrow.” Describe how to use both hands to put the tubes into the container.]*

**RECAP:** *[Describe each toddler’s actions with the tubes. Emphasize use of both hands to hold, shake, and roll a tube, and what items inside the tube did in response to a toddler’s movements.]*

**👁️ What to Look For—Option 1**

Sensory tubes are well suited to support toddlers’ practice in coordinated use of both hands in relation to visual interests driven by the colorful and sound-making contents of a tube. Look for opportunities to provide verbal guidance on hand and arm movements. Provide a demonstration when appropriate. Offer gentle hands-on support only when verbal support and demonstrations have not been helpful.

The activity description recommends two toddlers at a time, so individualized support can be provided. You may wish to increase the number of participants when sensory tube exploration is offered to toddlers who are familiar with how to appropriately manage a tube. You also may wish to offer two concurrent tube exploration activities to toddlers with sensory tube experiences, assuming a second adult and a sufficient number of tubes are available.

Some toddlers may think a sensory tube resembles a baseball bat or stick. Give a clear and gentle explanation that the tube is not for striking. Placing the tubes out for free exploration is not suggested until all toddlers in your room are familiar with how to play with sensory tubes.

Exploration of sensory tubes in this activity complements the use of open (mailing) tubes and balls in Block 19’s cognitive activity plan.

**📈 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

**Extra support** ■ Encourage a toddler to stand close to the container of tubes when pulling a tube.  
■ Encourage a toddler to put the tube on the floor before sitting.

**Enrichment** ■ Invite a toddler to explore two tubes at the same time. Encourage talk about differences in items inside the tube and how the two tubes respond to rolling and shaking.



## 12–24 Months

### Option 2 Informal Gathering



#### Skill and Goal

**Gross motor development**

**Fine motor development**

Toddlers with good walking skills practice balance and concentration skills by holding a sensory tube with both hands while walking on a simple path.



#### Key Concepts

Hold  
Path



#### Materials Needed

Sensory Tubes—1 per toddler  
Floor mats (see Be Prepared)



#### Also Promotes

Cognitive  
Self-Regulation  
Communication/Language

**Be Prepared:** This activity is for toddlers with good walking skills, as indicated in the learning goal. Use no-slip mats to arrange a short path for toddlers to follow, rearranging furnishings as necessary. The focus of the activity is motor balance coordination, not managing obstacles in a path.



Invite 2–3 toddlers to walk on a path while holding a sensory tube. Familiarize toddlers with the path by leading them on a walk along the path without holding anything. Describe how the path works.

Explain that each of us will hold a sensory tube while walking on the path. Then give each toddler a tube, holding it in a vertical position. Use both hands to hold the tube as you give it to a toddler. Draw attention to how each of your hands is wrapped around the tube. Provide time for toddlers to look at and explore their tube while standing.

If appropriate, demonstrate again the use of both hands while holding a tube upright (vertical). Encourage toddlers to look at where they are walking and try hard to not look at what is inside their tube.

Lead toddlers in holding a tube upright while walking on the path. Keep the activity lighthearted. You may wish to sing or say the following verse for each child or use “we” instead of a child’s name. (Tune: “Farmer in the Dell”)

**Diego walks around.**

**Diego walks around.**

**Hi-ho, there he goes.**

**Diego walks around.**

**Diego holds a tube (toy).**

**Diego holds a tube (toy).**

**Hi-ho, there he goes.**

**Diego holds a tube (toy).**

Repeat the walk if toddlers remain interested. Conclude the activity by describing what happened. Emphasize how we held a tube and looked at where we are going. If appropriate, comment on how it was hard to not look at what’s inside our tube!

**Option 2 continued** What to Look For—Option 2

Watch for opportunities to support several important developmental skills in this activity, including balance and coordination of motor movements and concentration on a walking path while trying to ignore the appealing contents of the sensory tube. If toddlers show considerable interest in exploring the sensory tubes in the opening segment of the activity, switch to elements of Option 1 rather than introducing the challenge of walking while holding an item of great appeal.

The suggested verse is intended to help the activity remain light in spirit. Toddlers should not be expected to hold a tube in a perfect vertical position. Some may drop their tube while walking. If this happens, help a toddler pick up a tube and gently remind the toddler to hold the tube with both hands (fingers) around the tube.

 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

**Extra support** ■ Arrange the path in a line rather than a circle. ■ If you anticipate holding a sensory tube while walking will be too challenging, invite a toddler to hold a small toy in one hand while walking on the path. This leaves the second hand/arm free for balance. A toddler also may walk on the path without carrying an object.

**Enrichment** ■ Encourage toddlers to hold their tube in a horizontal position. It does not matter whether the palms of toddlers' hands face up or down while grasping a tube. What's important is wrapping a hand (fingers) around the tube. ■ Expand the length of the walk or add turns to the walk. ■ Encourage toddlers to move their tube up and down in a shaking movement while walking. ■ Instead of, or in addition to, offering the suggested verse, play light, lively music as toddlers walk with the sensory tubes.



## Interest Area

**Materials Needed:** carts and doll strollers, cardboard craft tubes, sensory table with crinkled paper, small cars or animal figures or people figures, paint and brush, art smocks

To support toddlers' interest in tubes (extension of Option 1), provide cardboard craft tubes and items toddlers can put into the tubes. Examples: crinkled paper, small cars, and animal or people figures. Use toddlers' interests to determine the items. Another possibility is to set up a painting activity by covering a table with paper and providing tubes toddlers can paint with a chubby brush and tempera paint. Explain that we can use paint to make tubes as colorful as the sensory tubes. Remember the paint smocks!

To support toddlers' interest in walking with an object (extension of Option 2), provide and encourage use of doll strollers or toddler-size shopping carts. Invite toddlers to use carts to move play materials that are too bulky to hold while walking. A toddler with balanced walking skills may enjoy carrying novel objects. Examples: empty milk jugs, shoebox containers, and 1–2 smaller balls.

A small brown house icon with a chimney, positioned to the left of the text "Family Child Care".

### Family Child Care

**Materials Needed:** craft tubes, markers, masking tape

As a complement to Options 1 and 2 for toddlers, preschool-age and older children may enjoy participating in non-competitive games that involve balancing tubes in ways such as the following:

- balance on two arms
- balance on lap
- hold with one hand
- hold touching one shoulder
- hold with two hands while standing on one foot
- trade with a friend while on one foot

Add challenge by suggesting that children prevent their tube from touching the floor.

Older children also may enjoy creating new shapes by connecting craft tubes in different ways using masking tape.