



**Communication/
Language**

Exploring Words

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing that emphasizes unusual word sounds and how we learn from books.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers describe and engage in actions with toy cars that are related to words and pictures in a book.
- Option 3** (OO) A toddler participates in a book sharing that emphasizes connecting book words and information to his/her experiences.



Cognitive

Solving Problems

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers make one play dough creation for each of their two hands.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers make one pretend play dough treat for each of three bear counters.
- Option 3** (OO) A toddler distributes one of several different items to each of five monkey puppets.



Self-Regulation

Paying Attention

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers observe body movements coordinated with words of the “I’m a Little Teapot” song.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers practice making body movements to the “I’m a Little Teapot” song.
- Option 3** (IG) Toddlers coordinate singing and movement during a song.



Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers watch a puppet demonstrate how to ask someone to play and participate in an opportunity to play with a peer.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers participate with peers in creating a group painting.
- Option 3** (IG) Pairs of toddlers paint together with wheels of toy vehicles.



Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers ring a bell as part of listening to words in songs.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers practice starting and stopping ringing a bell as part of listening to words in a song.
- Option 3** (IG) Toddlers start and stop ringing a bell while listening to words of a song during a pretend ride on an imaginary bus.

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



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Receptive language
Expressive language

Toddlers participate in a book sharing that emphasizes unusual word sounds and how we learn from books.



Key Concepts

Zip
Zoom
Zippity-zoom



Materials Needed

Llama Llama Zippity-Zoom
by Anna Dewdney



Also Promotes

Self-Regulation

BEGIN: [*Invite 3–4 toddlers to join you in sharing a book that includes some fun words.*]

Hi my friends. Please come to share a fun book with me.

EXPLAIN: [*Show the book cover.*]

Our book is called *Llama Llama Zippity-Zoom*. Those are fun words. Llama Llama. Zippity-Zoom.

ASK: Do you think our book is going to be a silly book?

EXPLAIN: The pictures and words in our book will tell us what Llama Llama likes to do.

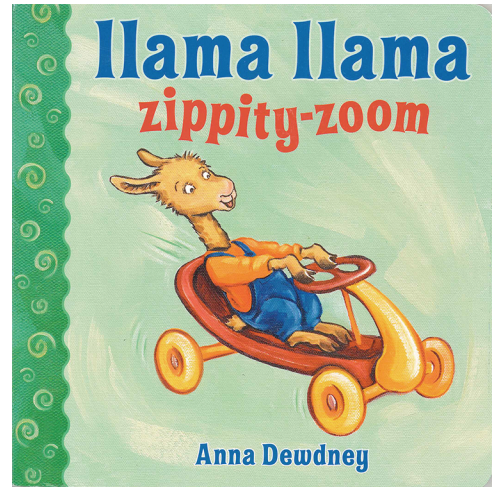
[*Point to your eyes, ears, and mouth as you describe each below.*]

Remember, we use our eyes to look at pictures in the book. We use our ears to listen to the words and to what other people say. We use our mouth to say things about the book and to ask questions about the book.

ACT: Let's open the book to the first page. We will learn more about Llama Llama.

[*Read the book text and use your own words to describe pictures and repeat key parts of the story. Use strategies, such as the following, to engage toddlers in the book:*

- *Read action words with excitement. Encourage toddlers to repeat action words. Examples:*
 - "*Llama Llama ZIP! Let's say 'zip' together.*"
 - "*Llama Llama ZOOM! Let's say 'zoom' together.*"
- *Ask questions that encourage toddlers to describe a picture or part of the story. Example: "What is Llama Llama doing?"*
- *Repeat and expand on toddlers' utterances. Example: "Lisa said 'Llama ride.' Llama Llama is riding on his scooter!"*





Option 1 *continued*

- *Connect the book’s story and images to toddlers’ experiences. Examples: “Look at Llama Llama on the swing! Do you like to swing high like Llama Llama?” “Carla said ‘I drive car!’ We have a car just like this one on our playground!”*
- *Use voice and facial expressions to promote interest.*
- *If toddlers become excited about saying the silly words, invite them to whisper the words on the last pages of the book. Demonstrate whispering words slowly and quietly. Example: “Now let’s whisper the words—screech, clunk, stop.”]*

RECAP: Our book has some fun words and sounds. We said some of the fun words together, like zip and zoom and zippity-zoom. We used our eyes to look at the pictures. We use our ears to listen to the words. Our eyes and ears helped us learn about Llama Llama. Maybe we can zip, zoom, and whoosh, just like Llama Llama, when we play outside!

What to Look For—Option 1

The plan emphasizes how we use our eyes and ears to learn things from a book. Note especially the plan’s suggestions that toddlers repeat the action words and consider connections between the book content and their own experiences.

Most likely toddlers will not correctly pronounce some words or sounds. At this age, it is not necessary to emphasize correct pronunciations, although it is important that you consistently offer correct, clear, and repeated pronunciations as a model.

Some toddlers may jump up to imitate the things Llama Llama does in the book. This can be a toddler’s way of expressing that he/she can do the same things as Llama Llama. It may be helpful to offer gentle reminders of waiting to talk or act.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Include each toddler’s name as you share the book. Example: “Look, T.J., this looks like a curvy slide.” ■ Toddlers may enjoy exploring the silly words in the book in a one-to-one setting. Invite individual toddlers to share the book with you at a later time.

Enrichment ■ At the conclusion of the book, encourage toddlers to say the action words again as they move their bodies. Example: “Let’s say ‘beep’ as we pretend to honk our horns. Beep! Beep!” Some toddlers may enjoy holding a paper plate as a steering wheel while pretending to ride the bike or drive the car. ■ Toddlers will likely have experienced Llama Llama’s activities in the book. Talk with toddlers about their experiences. Examples: “We have a slide on our playground. Llama Llama went ‘swoosh’ down the slide in the book. Do you go ‘swoosh’ down our slide?” “Susie has a scooter at her house. Does your scooter go ‘vroom?’”

24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Receptive language
Expressive language

Toddlers describe and engage in actions with toy cars that are related to words and pictures in a book.



Key Concepts

Zip
Zoom
Zippity-zoom
Swoosh
Vroom



Materials Needed

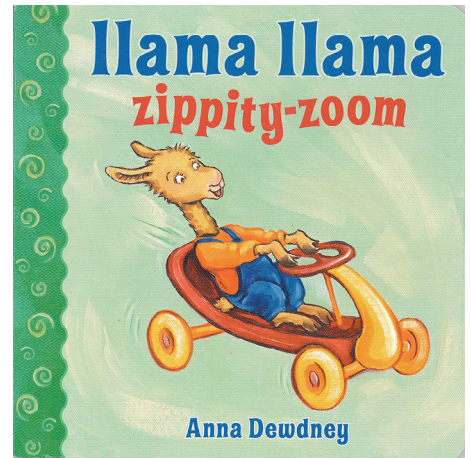
Llama Llama Zippity-Zoom
by Anna Dewdney
Toy car
Ramps for toy cars



Also Promotes

Self-Regulation

Provide toy cars and ramps in the block area. Sit on the floor and invite several toddlers to join you in play. Review the pictures and fun words in the book *Llama Llama Zippity-Zoom*. Talk with toddlers about the fun words and encourage them to use the provided materials and think about the words that describe sounds in the book. Examples: “Llama Llama goes zip, zoom on his scooter. I wonder how we can make the cars sound like the ‘zippity-zoom’ in our book?” “Your car is going fast down the ramp. Is it making the ‘swoosh’ sound that we heard in our book? What other sounds can your car make that are like sounds we heard in our book?” Describe each toddler’s actions and encourage experimentation with the cars, ramps, and blocks. Examples: “Devon, you are building a high ramp. I wonder if your car will go fast down your ramp?” “Jamar said ‘vroom!’ Jamar’s car is going ‘vroom’ down the ramp.”



👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

Toddlers will probably interact with the cars and ramps in different ways. Some toddlers may focus on the cars, whereas others will be interested in building with the ramps and blocks. Some toddlers may readily connect silly sounds or words from the book to their toy cars while driving on the ramps. Acknowledge each type of participation. You may support a child’s interest by suggesting additional ways to interact with the materials. Example: “You are driving the car back and forth. Would you like to make a road for your car, Marcus? How can we make a road with our blocks?” Look for opportunities to connect toddlers’ play to words, sounds, and concepts offered in the book.

📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Some toddlers may benefit from gentle prompting about playing with the provided materials. Example: “You are holding a car, Evan. What is your car going to do?” ■ Provide a calming activity for toddlers who become excited. Example: “It is time for the cars to rest. Let’s quietly drive our cars to the basket and put them on the shelf to rest.”

Enrichment ■ Provide additional transportation books in the block area. Talk with toddlers about sounds and actions of the vehicles in the books. ■ Talk with toddlers about the concepts up and down, high and low. Explain and show what each word means.

24–36 Months

Option 3 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Receptive language
Expressive language

A toddler participates in a book sharing that emphasizes connecting book words and information to his/her experiences.



Key Concepts

Splish
Splash



Materials Needed

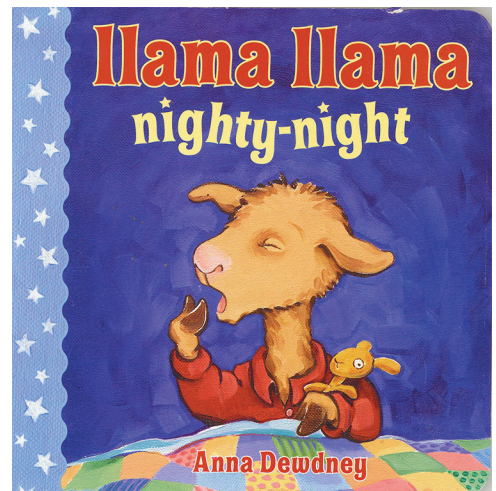
Llama Llama Nighty-Night
by Anna Dewdney
Teddy bear



Also Promotes

Cognitive

Sit next to a toddler to share the book *Llama Llama Nighty-Night*. Give the toddler a teddy bear and encourage him/her to make the teddy bear do things done by Llama Llama in the book. Examples: brush teeth, take a bath, snuggle in. Use your own words to describe pictures. Encourage the toddler to talk about pictures. Some pictures may prompt a toddler to recognize similar routines at home.



Use questions that encourage more than a yes or no response. Examples:

“I brush my teeth before bed just like Llama Llama. When do you brush your teeth, Jayden?” “Llama Llama is splishing and splashing with a rubber ducky in the tub! He is having fun. What toys do you (or would you like to) splish and splash with?”

Repeat and extend the toddler’s comments. Example:

- Child: Mommy read book.
- Caregiver: Your mommy reads books to you at home? Tell me about the books your mommy reads!
- Child: Llama, Llama.
- Caregiver: You have a Llama Llama book! Does it have silly sounds like our book? What is your book about?

👁️ What to Look For—Option 3

Option 3 is designed to help a toddler connect book pictures and text in the book to his/her experiences. Some toddlers will enjoy enacting the bedtime routine with the teddy bear. Others may wish to hold the soft toy and listen. Look for opportunities to engage the toddler in conversations about the book and his/her experiences. This is a valuable way to enhance language skills. Watch also for ways to encourage back-and-forth conversations with the toddler that also promote and enhance communication and language skills. Careful listening and open-ended questions are powerful tools for you to use with a toddler.

Option 3 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Positively acknowledge a toddler’s visual attention to the book and your words. These are beneficial forms of engagement in the activity that may or may not occur with words offered by the toddler. A toddler may not talk in response to your questions or comments. Silence does not necessarily mean the toddler is not engaged in or benefiting from the book sharing.

Enrichment ■ Talk with the toddler about items illustrated in the book that appear to be of special interest, such as a toy train, washcloth, bubbles, red pajamas, and blanket. Example: “You said ‘bubbles.’ Let’s talk about the bubbles on this page.”



Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Llama Llama Zippity-Zoom* by Anna Dewdney, toy cars and trucks, other Llama Llama books, such as *Llama Llama Hoppity-Hop* and *Llama Llama Wakey-Wake*.

Place Llama Llama books on a low table or surface. Arrange toy cars and trucks near the books. Encourage toddlers to make the cars and trucks do some of the things Llama Llama does in a book. As toddlers play, use the action words from a book. Example: “Brook, your car is driving fast just like Llama Llama on his scooter. Zip! Zoom!”



Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Llama Llama Zippity-Zoom* by Anna Dewdney, *Llama Llama Hoppity Hop* by Anna Dewdney

Llama Llama Zippity-Zoom may be shared with a mixed-age group. An additional option with toddlers and older children is to stand in an open area to share the book *Llama Llama Hoppity Hop* by Anna Dewdney. Encourage toddlers and preschool-age children to repeat the action words and then try the action after you read it on a book page. Examples: hop, jump, clap, stretch, bow, hug. Infants will enjoy sitting comfortably and securely nearby to watch other children try different actions.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills

Toddlers make one play dough creation for each of their two hands.



Key Concepts

Changing
One
Two



Materials Needed

Play dough (see Be Prepared)



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Prepare one three-inch ball of play dough (about the size of an orange) for each toddler.

Invite several toddlers to a clean and clear table to use play dough. Toddlers may sit or stand at the table. Show one ball of play dough. Explain that we will use our hands to create whatever we want with our ball of play dough.

We want to make one creation for each of our hands. This means we will make two creations. We will make one creation to hold in one hand and one creation to hold in our other hand.

Demonstrate the idea of making something to hold in each hand by extending one arm with an open hand when you make reference to “one hand” and extending your other arm with an open hand when you make reference to “our other hand.” When we are done, each of our hands will hold one creation.

Give each child one ball of play dough. Demonstrate a way to break a ball of play dough into two parts. You may wish to pull off a chunk of the dough into a second collection of dough. Or you may wish to partly flatten the ball and then push a hand sideways through the middle of the dough to begin a separation of the ball into two parts. The two parts do not need to be equal in size. Encourage toddlers to break their ball of play dough into two parts using whatever approach they would like. Figuring out how to form two collections of dough from one ball of play dough is an interesting problem for each toddler to solve. Provide assistance as needed. It is beneficial for toddlers’ sensory learning to use their hands for this task. Refrain from offering tools for breaking the ball into two parts.

Support toddlers in making two creations from their one ball of play dough, one creation at a time. Explain that we are changing the ball of play dough into something different. It is no longer one ball of dough. Demonstrate some ways to shape the dough if toddlers seem to need ideas of what to do. Examples: Roll a chunk of dough back and forth to create a hot dog shape. Roll a small amount of dough into a ball using both hands. Encourage different types of creations. Describe toddlers’ actions. Use descriptive words, such as flatten, roll, and push. You may wish to show how to press a thumb or finger(s) into a flattened or small ball of dough to make a design.

When toddlers have finished (or nearly finished) their creations, invite them to hold their creations in their hands: one creation in one hand, the other



**Option 1 continued**

creation in the other hand. Demonstrate by extending both of your arms, with palms of each hand facing up. Help each toddler hold both of their creations, one per hand.

👁️ What to Look For—Option 1

Look for ways to emphasize the activity's three primary opportunities for toddlers to consider the idea of making one creation for each of their two hands: (1) when toddlers change their one ball of play dough into two chunks of dough; (2) when toddlers work on one of their two creations at a time; and (3) at the end of the activity when toddlers hold one creation in each of their two hands. These opportunities support development of an early awareness of one-to-one correspondence. This important math understanding should not be formally taught during the toddler years, but it can be informally introduced through activities, such as the one offered in this option. Be especially careful to not skip the third opportunity (when toddlers hold a creation in each hand). In a similar way, the concepts of one and two can be informally mentioned during the activity (most toddlers are familiar with the words one and two from telling how old they are) but should not be formally taught at this age.

📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Prepare smaller balls of dough for each toddler if you anticipate a ball the approximate size of an orange will be too challenging to manipulate. ■ Encourage toddlers to show each of their hands (palms up) after you explain that we will make one creation for each of our hands. ■ Give reminders about keeping the dough on the table, such as “Play dough stays on the table and in our hands.” ■ You may wish to remind toddlers that our two creations can be different sizes. One creation can be bigger than the other. Our two creations can be different. They do not need to look the same. ■ Accept a toddler's reluctance to touch play dough. Invite the toddler to stay near you to watch others. Offer encouragement for future use, such as “Today you don't want to play with the dough. Maybe you will want to later.” ■ If a toddler tastes the dough, promptly ask him/her to remove the dough from his/her mouth and discard it. Help the child wash his/her hands and return to the activity.

Enrichment ■ Invite toddlers to describe how they made their creations. (Note: this suggestion is different than asking toddlers to describe what they made.)



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Problem-solving

Toddlers make one pretend play dough treat for each of three bear counters.



Key Concepts

One



Materials Needed

Play dough (see Be Prepared)
Bear counters—3 per toddler



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Prepare one three-inch ball of play dough (about the size of an orange) for each toddler.

BEGIN: [*Invite several toddlers to join you at a low table to play in a pretend bakery.*]

EXPLAIN: Today we can pretend we work in a teddy bear bakery. At our bakery, we use play dough to make treats for teddy bears. Each of us will have three bear counters. We can make one treat for each of the teddy bears.

ACT: [*Give each toddler three bear counters, preferably in different colors, and one ball of play dough. Encourage toddlers to put their bear counters in a line toward the top part of their workspace, and leave space in front to make things for our bears.*]

Invite toddlers to talk about what is made at a bakery. If necessary, describe some things toddlers could make, such as muffins and bread. Connect the bakery or bakery items to baked goods served at your center and/or a book sharing about a bakery, if possible.

Emphasize that we can make what we want. We can bake a different item for each bear, such as a muffin for one bear and a slice of bread (toast) for another bear. Or we can make the same thing for each of our bears.

Allow ample time for the toddlers to use the dough as they like. Talk with each toddler about what he/she is doing with the dough. Example: "Aaron, I see you are pulling small pieces from your big ball of dough."

Playfully animate one of your counting bears. Example: "Here is a bakery. I wonder if the baker has a yummy muffin for me. I am really hungry!"

Encourage toddlers to place one of their baked items next to each bear. Encourage toddlers to describe (or you describe) what they are giving each bear. Example of your description: "I think this bear got a muffin. I think this other bear got a roll." It is fine if toddlers have leftover dough.]

RECAP: We pretended to work in a bakery. We were bakers! We baked one thing for each of our bears. Do you think the bears will enjoy eating the pretend things we baked?

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

If you notice a toddler has more or fewer pretend bakery items than bears, help the toddler line up his/her bears and place one available item in front of each bear. Talk about the situation. Examples: "This bear doesn't have anything to eat from our bakery. What can we do?" "Each bear has a muffin. And you have one muffin left over. What would you like to do with this leftover muffin?"

Toddlers often want to do activities their own way. Some toddlers may wish to make a hot dog, taco, or ice cream for each counting bear. Flexibility with what is made with the play dough is important. The activity goal is to prepare one item for each bear.

After making one item for each bear, toddlers may wish to repeat the activity, make more items for more bears (see Enrichment tip), or play with the dough in another way.

📈 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Show and discuss some book pictures of a bakery if toddlers seem unclear about what a bakery does. ■ Offer two rather than three bear counters if you anticipate three may be too challenging. ■ Demonstrate ways to break one ball of play dough into parts (see Option 1). Many toddlers may simply pull some dough from the ball to form each item.

Enrichment ■ If a toddler wants to make more baked goods from his/her remaining ball of play dough, encourage the toddler to make one more item for each of the bears. Alternatively, you could offer more bears. ■ For fun, make a chef's hat for each toddler and staff. For each hat, cut a paper band three inches tall and long enough to encircle the toddler's head. Fasten crinkled tissue paper inside the band with tape. You may wish to print a toddler's name on each hat.



24–36 Months

Option 3 One-to-One



Skill and Goal Problem-solving

A toddler distributes one of several different items to each of five monkey puppets.



Key Concepts One

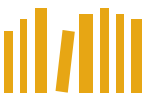


Materials Needed

- 5 monkey finger puppets
- 5 The First Years® Soft Teething Beads
- 5 felt squares
- 5 wooden cubes
- Basket



Also Promotes Communication/Language



Optional Reading

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow

Be Prepared: Place the following in the basket: finger puppets, teething beads, and cubes (five of each).

Invite one toddler to join you to play with five monkey puppets. Sit facing the toddler and lay the felt squares in a line in front of the toddler. Explain that the pieces of felt are pretend blankets. We are going to put a toy monkey and other things for a monkey on each of the pretend blankets.

Give the toddler a basket containing the monkey finger puppets, the teething beads, and five wooden cubes. Explain that the toddler can put one of each item on each of the pretend blankets. Begin with the monkey puppet. After there is one monkey puppet on each pretend blanket, invite the toddler to select another item to put on each pretend blanket. Proceed by item. Example: Each blanket gets a wooden cube. Remind the toddler that each blanket/monkey gets one.



Promote a back-and-forth conversation with the toddler about how the monkey might use the items. Example: A toddler may pretend the wooden cube is a lunch box or food or a bed. Invite the toddler to arrange each monkey's items as he/she wishes. Example: The toddler may use the pretend blanket to cover the monkey rather than as something for the monkey to lie on.

Conclude the activity by emphasizing that the toddler put one type of thing on each blanket for a monkey.

👁️ What to Look For—Option 3

Look at the ease with which the toddler distributes items (some toddlers may want to look and think before acting) and offer guidance, as appropriate, without directing the distribution of items. See the Extra Support tip for reducing the challenge of the activity. Like Options 1 and 2, this activity promotes the development of awareness of one-to-one correspondence without teaching this concept.

📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Omit one of the items (such as the wooden cube) or create fewer groupings (three to four instead of five) if you anticipate distributing three items across five groupings will be too challenging.

Enrichment ■ If a toddler wants more, provide one of each item, so there are always the same number of monkeys as other play materials.



Interest Area

Materials Needed: trays with dividers, pretend food, small boxes (such as mailing boxes) vehicles, cups, monkey finger puppets, dollhouse, people figures

Toddlers enjoy putting items in trays with dividers. Place trays that will hold pretend food in the dramatic area. Place small boxes in the block area with vehicles that will fit into each. Mailing boxes can be used as garages, or you may have garages at your center. Encourage toddlers to put one cup next to each plate at the dramatic play table. Use the monkey finger puppets in the dollhouse (in place of people figures), with props the toddlers can divide five or fewer ways.



Family Child Care

Materials Needed: 6 toys or balls, muffin pan, small felt squares, musical instruments, box of markers, cups and plates, paper

Infants enjoy placing one toy or ball into each hole of a muffin pan.

If toddlers are interested in play with small figures or vehicles, cut small felt squares to represent homes, food, beds, or garages. Encourage preschool-age children to help you distribute items, such as one box of markers at each chair, or one cup at each plate.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal Concentration

Toddlers observe body movements coordinated with words of the “I’m a Little Teapot” song.



Key Concepts

Teapot
Tea
Tip
Pour



Materials Needed

Toy teapot



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Optional Reading

I’m a Little Teapot! by Annie Kubler

Be Prepared: Become familiar with the words and actions of the song, “I’m a Little Teapot.” You may wish to refer to the book suggested in Optional Reading or an Internet source. It is recommended you not use a video or CD for the activity. Toddlers will benefit from observing and interacting with you! Your singing the song also allows the words and songs to be adapted to toddlers’ reactions.

BEGIN: *[Invite several toddlers to join you for a song about a teapot. Display the toy teapot. Point to parts of the teapot as you describe them.]*



We are going to learn a new song today! Our song is about a teapot like the teapot I am holding.

EXPLAIN: This is a teapot. We make tea in a teapot. Tea is something we drink. Tea is made with water. The water goes in this part.

ASK: Where do you think the tea comes out?

[Repeat and expand toddlers’ responses. Example: “Lamar said ‘tip.’ We tip the teapot to pour out the tea.”]

ACT: *[Point to and describe the teapot’s handle and spout.*

Demonstrate and describe the tipping action with the teapot.]

We lift the handle to tip the teapot. The tea comes out through its spout when we tip the teapot to pour the tea.

EXPLAIN: I am going to sing a song about a teapot. I am going to pretend to be a teapot while I sing the song!

Please use your eyes to watch what I do.

[Point to your eyes.]

Please use your ears to listen to the song.

[Point to your ears.]

ACT: *[Sing the words of the song as you show toddlers the accompanying motions. Sing the words clearly and at a pace that allows children to hear each word. Smile and look at each toddler as you sing.*



Option 1 continued

Repeat and describe the three basic motions without the song.]

First we put our hand on our hip to make the handle.

Next we put out our other arm for a spout. Remember, the spout is where the tea comes out!

Last we tip to the side. The tea pours out when we tip the teapot.

[Repeat the song with the three basic motions. Encourage toddlers to observe the motions and listen to the words.]

RECAP: Today we listened to the words of a song about a teapot. We watched movements for the words. We learned how a teapot works. It is fun to pretend our body is a teapot!



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Concentration

Toddlers practice making body movements to the “I’m a Little Teapot” song.



Key Concepts

Tip
Pour
Teapot
Handle
Spout



Materials Needed

Toy teapot



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Optional Reading

I’m a Little Teapot! by Annie Kubler

Be Prepared: Become familiar with the words and actions of the song, “I’m a Little Teapot.” You may wish to refer to the book suggested in Optional Reading or use an Internet source.

Invite several toddlers to sing a song about a teapot. Show toddlers the toy teapot and describe how it works. Label and describe the handle and the spout. Explain how we tip the teapot and pour the tea out of the spout. Introduce the song and invite toddlers to listen to the words and sing with you.

Sing the words slowly and clearly while demonstrating the movements. Smile and look at each toddler.

After singing the song with toddlers, review each of the three main movements without the words and invite toddlers to imitate you. The main movements are:

- making a handle by putting our hand on our hip
- using our opposite arm to make a spout
- tipping our body to the side to pour out the tea.

Example: “I put my hand on my hip to make a handle. Can you put your hand on your hip, like I am doing? Next, I put my other arm out to make the spout. Let’s all pretend to be a teapot with a handle and spout!”

Invite toddlers to make the movements as you sing the song slowly.

Observe toddlers’ efforts with the body movements. You may wish to review specific words and accompanying movements and practice the song again.

Example: “Would you like to do the song again? Let’s try one more time!”



24–36 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal
Concentration

Toddlers coordinate singing and movement during a song.



Key Concepts

- Tip
- Pour
- Tea
- Teapot
- Handle
- Spout
- Sing
- Move



Materials Needed

Toy teapot



Also Promotes

- Communication/Language
- Cognitive
- Physical/Health



Optional Reading

I'm a Little Teapot! by Annie Kubler

Be Prepared: Become familiar with the words and actions of the song, “I’m a Little Teapot.” You may wish to refer to the book suggested in Optional Reading or use an Internet source. This option differs from Option 2 by encouraging toddlers to sing the song with you while making the movements. Singing (or thinking about singing) and also making the corresponding body movements is more challenging than doing the movements without trying to also sing.

Invite several toddlers to sing a song about a teapot. Sing the song slowly and repeat phrases that may be challenging for toddlers to say or sing. Include the body movements when you sing. Show toddlers the toy teapot and describe how it works. Emphasize how we tip the handle of the teapot to pour the tea out of the spout.

Invite toddlers to sing and do the accompanying movements with you. Sing clearly and slowly, accentuating each body movement. Encourage toddlers to move their bodies with you as you sing the song. Encourage toddlers to sing with you. You may wish to repeat the song several times. Acknowledge each toddler’s efforts to participate.



👁️ What to Look For—Options 1–3

The activity plan offers different types of opportunities for toddlers to practice concentration skills. Pay attention to toddlers’ visual engagement of your demonstration of a teapot (the toy teapot as well as your body as an imaginary teapot) and their efforts to do each of the three main movements. The description of a teapot and how it works is an important part of each option. Some toddlers may not be familiar with a real teapot. It is a useful cognitive challenge for toddlers to think about the song and its actions in relation to how a teapot works.

At this age, toddlers are just beginning to do motions as they sing or say rhymes. Some toddlers may not sing and move at the same time, whereas others may say words and do the corresponding motions. Some toddlers may focus on the motions, and others may focus on the words. Even though Option 3 invites toddlers to sing, it is likely that many will not sing or may sing one or two words. Toddlers will probably think about the words even when they are not singing. Positively recognize and acknowledge all levels of participation, and maintain a lighthearted approach to the activity without becoming an entertainer the toddlers simply watch.



More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Pause between lines of the song, or after key action words in the song, to help toddlers focus on the body movement you are demonstrating and describing. ■ Make time for each toddler to hold the toy teapot and pretend to pour tea.

Enrichment ■ Some toddlers may enjoy taking turns holding the teapot and making it tip as they sing the song, or leading toddlers in doing the motions. ■ In a repeat of the song and motions, reverse the arm used for the spout and handle.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: water table, toy teapot, toy drinking cups or saucers

Invite several toddlers to play with the teapot and cups in the water table. Encourage toddlers to practice tipping and pouring water out of the teapot and into the cups. Toddlers may wish to sing the song while they tip and pour with the teapot.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: juice and snack, real teapot, cups

Participating in song and movement activities is enjoyable for children of all ages. Infants will enjoy watching and being part of the group. After singing the “I’m a Little Teapot” song with actions (see activity descriptions), invite children to a tea party. Provide juice and a snack. Use a real teapot (that you manage) to pour juice or water into cups. Invite older children to set the table and pass out the snack.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Social interaction skills

Toddlers watch a puppet demonstrate how to ask someone to play and participate in an opportunity to play with a peer.



Key Concepts

Play together



Materials Needed

2 puppets
Blocks



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Invite 3–4 toddlers to join you in the block area. Sing “The More We Get Together” as toddlers join the gathering.*]

ACT: [*Introduce the puppets. Alternate making two puppets speak to the toddlers.*]

Puppet 1: Welcome! I am so happy to see you today!

Puppet 2: I see so many friends! I see . . .

[*Name each toddler sitting in the group. Example: “I see Devon, and Carlos, and Isabella!”*]

Puppet 1: I love to play with friends. But sometimes I don’t know how to tell someone I want to play. Can you help me learn how to let my friends know I want to play?

Puppet 2: Sure! I just ask a friend if they’d like to play. Let me show you.

[*Make Puppet 2 speak to a child in the gathering. Use the child’s name.*]

Hello, (child’s name). Would you like to play with me? We can play with blocks!

[*If the child responds, have Puppet 2 tell Puppet 1 how the child responded. Example: “See, (child’s name) said she would play with me. It can be easy to ask someone to play!”*]

Puppet 1: I like to play with blocks! Can I play too?

Puppet 2: Sure! It’s fun to play with other friends.

[*Have Puppet 2 suggest the following to toddlers in the gathering:*]

All of us can play with blocks for a while. We can stay with you. Let’s all play together with the blocks!

[*Encourage toddlers to play together as they build with blocks. Use both your voice and the puppets’ voices to support toddlers’ interactions. Consider using the following strategies:*

- Use the puppets to model friendly interactions focused on play. Example: “Tania, your tower is getting tall. Can I help you build it?”
- Comment on toddlers’ interactions with each other. Example: “Molly and Frankie are building a road together. They are both



Option 1 continued

- putting blocks on the floor for the road.”*
- *Use the toddlers’ names to help increase toddlers’ awareness of one another.*
 - *Comment on signs of a toddler noticing what another toddler is doing. Example: “Uziel, you are smiling at Lisa’s tower. Would you like to help her build the tower?”*
 - *Encourage a toddler to notice what a peer is doing with blocks. Example: “Bethany, you are building a tower and Chandelle is building a road. Do you see her road?”*
 - *Play next to toddlers but avoid leading the play.]*

RECAP: A puppet showed us how to ask someone to play. The puppet said “Would you like to play with me?” Then the puppet asked us to play together with the blocks. We are learning how to ask someone to play. We had fun playing together with the blocks!

What to Look For—Option 1

Some toddlers will be familiar with playing with peers in a group, whereas other toddlers may be in an early phase of learning to share play materials and do things with one or more peers. Although the activity is aimed at promoting play interactions among peers, not all toddlers are ready for this step. Some toddlers will prefer to play independently near their peers. Acknowledge each type of participation in the activity and avoid comments that imply the only way to participate in the activity is to play with someone else. The development of peer interaction skills takes time and practice. Supportively acknowledge individual efforts with the blocks (see first Extra Support tip).

Some toddlers may not fully understand that an animated puppet is not real. Allow time for each child to touch a puppet, if interested.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Sit near a toddler who is unfamiliar with group play to describe what other toddlers are doing. ■ Act as a play partner with a toddler who is new to group play.

Enrichment ■ If two toddlers seem ready to play together, offer a gentle nudge in the form of a question. Example: “Chloe, would you like to help Hanna build a tower?” ■ Toddlers who show interest in the puppets may enjoy using them to act out their own play scenario with the blocks. ■ Comment positively on individual efforts as well as play with a peer. Example: “Samantha, you put that big block on top of the small block. It did not fall down! Your tower is getting taller and taller. I can tell you like to build towers.”



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Social interaction skills

Toddlers participate with peers in creating a group painting.



Key Concepts

Paint together



Materials Needed

- Large piece of butcher paper
- Washable tempera paint in multiple colors
- 3–4 shallow foam trays (see Be Prepared)
- Chubby paintbrushes
- Art smocks—1 per toddler



Also Promotes

Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Firmly affix the butcher paper to a low table or surface. Pour about four tablespoons of paint into the trays, using a different color for each. Snack-size paper plates may be used instead of foam trays.

Invite 2–3 toddlers to paint together. Help toddlers put on their art smocks and give each toddler one paintbrush and a tray of paint. Invite toddlers to paint together to make one big picture that will be displayed in the room. Encourage toddlers to interact with each other as they paint together. Use strategies, such as the following, to promote positive peer interactions during the activity:

- Serve as a coach for toddlers in learning how to initiate play interactions. Provide words toddlers can use to initiate play. Example: “Carly, I can see you want your friend JD to paint with you. You can say, ‘JD, will you paint with me?’”
- Facilitate sharing of items as a first step in joint play. Example: “Noah, I see you looking at the blue paint Carly is using. Would you like to use blue paint, too?” Pause for the toddler (Noah) to respond. If Noah communicates “yes,” facilitate some sharing by saying “Carly, Noah would like to share the blue paint with you. You can both use the same tray of paint.”
- Describe instances of sharing paint or brushes. Example: “Mariah and Noah are both painting with red. They are sharing the tray of red paint!”
- Remind toddlers that they are painting together to make one big picture for the room. “Carly is making big lines up and down the paper, and JD is making small squiggly lines back and forth. You are both painting together to make a big picture for our room!”

What to Look For—Option 2

This activity encourages toddlers to work together to create art to be displayed in the room. Some toddlers will enjoy painting together, whereas others may prefer to paint independently next to their peers. Although the activity emphasizes play interactions among peers, some toddlers will need extra time to develop these skills (see Extra Support tip). Recognize that each toddler’s participation in this group project is a step toward developing beginning social skills.

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

Extra support ■ Some toddlers may struggle to share their space on a group project. Encourage toddlers who do not wish to share space to use their words to request where they would like to paint. Example: “I can see that Carly is too close to you, Noah. You can say, ‘I am painting right here.’”

Enrichment ■ Encourage toddlers to watch what the others are doing. Comment when toddlers naturally imitate one another or do similar things. Example: “You are both making big lines by moving your paintbrushes up and down the paper.”

24–36 Months

Option 3 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Social interaction skills

Pairs of toddlers paint together with wheels of toy vehicles.



Key Concepts

Paint together



Materials Needed

- Large pieces of paper—1 per pair of toddlers
- Washable tempera paint
- 3–4 shallow foam trays (see Be Prepared)
- Several toy cars and trucks

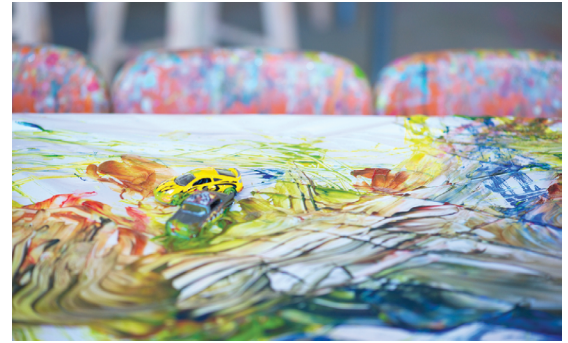


Also Promotes

Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Firmly affix the paper to a low table or surface. Pour a small amount of paint into the trays, using a different color for each. Place the toy vehicles nearby. Snack-size paper plates may be used instead of foam trays.

Invite one pair of toddlers at a time to create a wheel painting together. Introduce the toy vehicles and encourage each toddler to select one to dip into the paint and “drive” across the paper. Toddlers can use the wheels of several cars and trucks to make paint marks on the paper together.



As toddlers work together to create the wheel painting, comment on their interactions with each other. Example: “Mari is using blue paint on her wheels. Shin is using yellow paint on his wheels. When you paint over each other’s tracks, you make green paint! You created green!” Describe how the toddlers make marks with their cars alongside a friend. Examples: “You are driving your cars side by side. You are painting together!” “You both used the red paint with your cars. What color are you going to choose next?”

What to Look For—Option 3

This activity encourages toddlers to work together in pairs to create a special type of painting. Toddlers have the opportunity to drive their cars side by side or work together to create different patterns, such as crossing each other’s wheel marks. Although this activity encourages play interactions between toddlers, some toddlers will prefer to create wheel marks in their own space on the paper. Acknowledge each type of participation. Describe the actions of each toddler to create awareness of the other, which can support the development of beginning social skills.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ To avoid possible conflict over the use of certain toy vehicles, ensure there are several similar options of cars and trucks for toddlers to choose from. ■ Some toddlers may enjoy revisiting this activity in a one-to-one setting with you.

Enrichment ■ Toddlers may enjoy creating a “story” with their cars and trucks as they paint, such as the cars racing, getting stuck, or driving to work. ■ Point out differences in the marks made by the wheels. Example: “Cory’s truck wheels are making wide marks on the paper. Mari’s car wheels are making smaller marks.”



Interest Area

Materials Needed: toy cars and trucks, blocks, puppet (optional)

Place toy cars and trucks in the block center. Encourage toddlers to work together while building. Encourage toddlers to initiate play with one another. Example: "Madison, you are watching Gabby drive the car on the road she made. Would you like to drive a car on the road, too?" You may wish to use the puppet to comment on toddlers' play activities.



Family Child Care

Materials Needed: large pieces of paper—1 per pair of children, washable tempera paint, 3–4 shallow foam trays or snack-size paper plates, several toy cars and trucks

Children of all ages will enjoy painting with the wheels of cars and trucks. Invite older children to pair with toddlers to create paintings together. Encourage positive social interactions while they work on their painting. Talk with each of the children about their ideas and actions as they paint. Older babies may enjoy playing with a chunky toy car and a small amount of washable finger paint on a high chair tray.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Fine motor development

Toddlers ring a bell as part of listening to words in songs.



Key Concepts

Hold
Shake
Listen
Ring
Stop



Materials Needed

Bells—1 per toddler and caregiver



Also Promotes

Self-Regulation
Communication/Language



Optional Reading

Frère Jacques by Amy Pixton

Time for Bed by Mem Fox

Be Prepared: This activity assumes toddlers have had prior experience in manipulating a bell. If toddlers have had limited or no experience in moving a bell, provide guided (not open-ended) time for playful bell exploration in which you describe toddlers' bell movements and sounds plus offer demonstrations of ringing a bell, if necessary. Be familiar with the words and tune of "Frère Jacques/Are You Sleeping?" by looking at Internet resources or asking a coworker. Also, practice singing the "Ring, Ring, Ring Our Bells" song included in the activity plan.

BEGIN: [*Ring a bell as you invite toddlers to join you in ringing bells.*]

EXPLAIN: Here are bells.

[*Give each toddler one bell.*]

I rang my bell while I was inviting you to join me to ring bells. Soon all of us will be able to ring our bells.



We can make a good bell sound by holding on to the handle of the bell.

Let's all point to the handle of our bell.

[*Point to your bell's handle. Encourage toddlers to point to handles on their bells.*]

Now look at how I am holding my bell. Please hold your bell the same way.

[*Demonstrate how to hold the bell by the handle with one hand. Draw attention to your hand that is not holding the bell. Encourage toddlers to hold the handles of their bells with one hand.*]

ACT: Let's take turns shaking our bell two or three times. Remember, we hold our bell with one hand and shake. I will ring my bell first.

[*Ring your bell twice. Place the bell well in front of you so your bell action is a demonstration for toddlers. Encourage toddlers, one at a time, to ring their bells several times each.*]

EXPLAIN: Our bell makes a cool sound when we hold the handle of the bell.

Let's ring our bells to a song I will sing. We need to listen carefully to the words of the song. The words will tell us what to do.

We will shake our bells when the words say "ring, ring, ring our bells." We will stop moving our bells when the song says to stop ringing our bells. Remember, we use our ears to listen carefully.

**Option 1 continued**

ACT: [Sing the following “Ring, Ring, Ring Our Bells” song. Encourage toddlers to ring their bells. (Tune: “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”)]

Ring, ring, ring our bells.
Ring and ring our bells.
Ring, ring, ring our bells,
[pause]
And now we’re going to stop.

Positively acknowledge toddlers’ efforts. Emphasize that we rang our bells when the song said to “ring, ring, ring our bells” and we worked hard to stop ringing our bells when the song said “And now we’re going to stop.”]

EXPLAIN: I want to sing one more song. We can ring our bells to the song.

The song is about a boy named Brother John. He hears a bell in the morning. The ringing bell helps Brother John wake up in the morning.

We can ring our bells together through the song.

We stop ringing our bells when the song stops.

ACT: Let’s start ringing our bells to wake up sleepy Brother John.

[Sing “Frère Jacques/Are You Sleeping?” once. Encourage toddlers to ring their bells with the music.]

EXPLAIN: We rang our bells to a song about bells. We stopped ringing our bells when the song stopped.

The bell helps Brother John wake up in the morning. Today I think Brother John is very, very sleepy. Let’s ring our bells louder so Brother John wakes up!

ACT: [Sing “Frère Jacques/Are You Sleeping?” again. Encourage toddlers to ring their bells with the song you sing.]

RECAP: We listened to songs that helped us ring our bells. We know how to ring our bells by moving our hands. Do you think we rang our bells loud enough to wake up Brother John?

👁️ What to Look For—Option 1

This activity introduces the idea of moving an object as part of listening to a song. At this age, toddlers cannot be expected to ring their bells in unison or to produce a particular rhythm. Still, the activity offers experiences in combining music and movement in a guided (versus fully open-ended) arrangement. The start and stop actions probably will be uneven across toddlers. In addition to developmental differences

**Option 1 continued**

in self-regulation skills, it can be difficult to hear words to a song when many bells are ringing. The second song does not include the word “stop”; the ending of the song is the signal to stop shaking bells.

Some toddlers may find the sounds of many bells to be overstimulating. They may prefer an adaptation of the activity for a one-to-one arrangement or with one other toddler only.

A small icon consisting of three black squares of increasing size stacked vertically to the left of the text.**More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

Extra support ■ Repeat the “Ring, Ring, Ring Our Bells” song if toddlers seem interested and/or you think another experience is needed in ringing and then stopping action with the bells. ■ You may wish to offer a hand signal for stop.

Enrichment ■ A toddler may want to lead his/her peers in bell ringing the second time a song is offered. ■ Explain that “ding, ding, dong” (in second song) refers to the bell sound. ■ Invite toddlers to compare the sounds of their bells when (1) shaking with one hand on the handle and (2) shaking with both hands cupped over the bell. ■ Invite toddlers to compare the sound of one bell ringing to the sound of all bells ringing.



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal Fine motor development

Toddlers practice starting and stopping ringing a bell as part of listening to words in a song.



Key Concepts

- Stop
- Start
- Quiet



Materials Needed

- Bells—1 per toddler and caregiver
- Mat or blanket (see Be Prepared)



Also Promotes

- Self-Regulation
- Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Use a mat or blanket that is large enough for several toddlers and you to sit on with bells. This outdoor activity may be used indoors if outdoor time is not possible.

Take a basket of bells outdoors. Invite several toddlers to sit on a mat or blanket with you. Sing the adjacent song (Tune: “ABCD”) with requests to start and to stop ringing bells. If you routinely use a hand sign for sleep with toddlers, offer it at the end of the song.

Demonstrate how the bell takes a nap by covering it with both hands on your lap. The “take a nap” idea is new to this activity and offers an additional way for toddlers to think about making their bell “quiet.” Remind toddlers that when the song stops, the bells stop. Emphasize that we use our hand to ring our bell, to stop ringing our bell, and to put our bell in our lap. You may wish to describe or ask toddlers how the bells sound different when we ring them outside than when we ring the bells inside our room.

**Ring and ring and ring and ring,
Ring our bells, as we sing.
We can play a happy noise.
It is fun for girls and boys.
Put your bells into your lap.
Time to stop, bell takes a nap.**

👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

This option offers additional practice in responding to a song’s request to stop ringing a bell. Consistent with the Option 1 guidance, toddlers cannot be expected to ring their bells in unison, and some are likely to continue ringing after the stop request. Part of the practice opportunity in this activity is listening to and understanding words. You may wish to omit the tune and simply say the words of the song, giving emphasis to the phrase “put your bells in your lap” and to the word “stop” and their appropriate actions. Drawing attention to how we use our hands to ring and stop ringing our bell supports toddlers’ early awareness of how we use different parts of our body.

Toddlers often have favorite songs they want to repeat. Repetition helps them learn the lyrics and the meaning of words in the song. If the toddlers learn the words to the song, intentionally leave a word out for them to sing. You might pretend to forget a word, or simply pause for the children to complete the phrase. Emphasize the meaning of missing words with gestures and facial expressions.

**Option 2 continued**A small icon of a three-step staircase. **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2**

Extra support ■ Sit next to a toddler who seems uncertain about how to engage in the activity.

■ Positively acknowledge continued bell ringing when you sing or say a stop request. Stopping the ringing action is challenging for most toddlers and politely recognizing the continued ringing offers a supportive setting for practice. Example: “It’s really hard to stop ringing our bells!”

Enrichment ■ Add variety and challenge by inviting toddlers to walk while ringing their bells. Lead a walk (parade) with the bells. Encourage the toddlers to stop walking and stop ringing their bells. Then start walking and ringing the bell. It is likely too challenging to expect toddlers to stop ringing their bells but continue walking. ■ Lightheartedly incorporate stop and start into other play interactions with toddlers.



24–36 Months

Option 3 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Fine motor development
Gross motor development

Toddlers start and stop ringing a bell while listening to words of a song during a pretend ride on an imaginary bus.



Key Concepts

Ding
Stop
Start



Materials Needed

Toddler-size chairs—1 per toddler
Bells—1 per toddler and caregiver



Also Promotes

Self-Regulation
Communication/Language



Optional Reading

Wheels on the Bus by Raffi
Wheels on the Bus by Scarlett Wing

Arrange small chairs in a double line, like bus seats. Invite toddlers to ride a pretend bus. Pass out imaginary bus tickets to each toddler. Give each toddler one bell when he/she is seated. Sit on a low chair to maintain eye contact with the toddlers. Sing the “Wheels on the Bus” song. Include the following verse: The bells on the bus go ding, ding, ding. Encourage toddlers to start ringing their bells. When the bus song stops, encourage toddlers to stop ringing their bells. Ask toddlers where they would like to go on the bus. Example: “OK! Let’s all ride the bus to the city/farm/zoo.” Describe the meaning of “ding” and emphasize how our hands can make our bells ring and stop ringing. Repeat the song if toddlers remain interested.

👁️ What to Look For—Option 3

Toddlers have a natural desire to move. You may find it helpful to stop during the activity for toddlers to get off the bus and change seats. This promotes practice in controlling large motor movements. The primary challenge of this activity is to start and stop the bell while on the pretend bus with peers. There is value in the activity even though, at this age, the bus game will not be orderly. The pretend play context supports toddlers’ developing awareness of others and cooperative interactions. After the activity ends, toddlers may enjoy using the imaginary bus for continued pretend play. A line of chairs can also be used as a train on another day.

📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Provide extra seats so toddlers can make choices. ■ Take the role of bus driver to facilitate the activity.

Enrichment ■ Toddlers may enjoy other motions named in the song, such as bouncing up and down. ■ Share one of the *Wheels on the Bus* books. Later, sit with toddlers to compare the two books. The passengers in one book are all animals.



Interest Area

Materials Needed: basket, bells, shakers, *Wheels on the Bus* books, toy buses, people figures, paint, and markers

Provide a basket of bells so toddlers may continue to explore making sounds with their hands. Notice and describe when toddlers start and stop a bell sound. Show each toddler how to put the bells back in the basket. After toddlers have had sufficient time to explore bells, add shakers to the basket so toddlers can compare the sounds of shakers and bells. Rotate some new books into the book display. Arrange *Wheels on the Bus* books with toy buses and people figures. During a creative activity, sing with toddlers as they paint or use markers.



Family Child Care

Materials Needed: bells and rattles

Gather toddlers, infants, and preschool children, making sure each has enough room to ring a bell. Infants will enjoy using rattles as part of making sounds with other children. Encourage toddlers and preschool-age children to listen to differences between one bell and all bells ringing. Sing familiar songs. Consider having older children sit together and pretend younger children are backup singers.