



**Communication/
Language**

Exploring Words

- Option 1** (OO) A toddler participates in a book sharing that emphasizes how book text describes what is shown in pictures.
- Option 2** (OO) A toddler retells a familiar story by describing pictures and helping a caregiver connect book text to pictures.



Cognitive

Solving Problems

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers walk under a pretend ribbon waterfall held at a level of their choice.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers move a toy turtle in different spatial arrangements in relation to their bodies.
- Option 3** (IG) Toddlers walk around a pretend pond, carrying a toy fish in their hand that is closest to the pond, and then reverse their direction of walking.



Self-Regulation

Paying Attention

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers watch a teddy bear do movements suggested in a song.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers engage in movements suggested in a song and demonstrated by a teddy bear.



Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing about playing together and becoming friends.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers work with play dough, with opportunities to notice each other's actions and share tools.



Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers explore making scribbles, lines, and circles with markers on paper.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers explore coloring with crayons on the textured surfaces of boxes.
- Option 3** (IG) Toddlers use crayons or markers to draw a road or path for small toys.

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



24–36 Months

Option 1 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Awareness of print and pictures

Receptive language

Expressive language

A toddler participates in a book sharing that emphasizes how book text describes what is shown in pictures.



Key Concepts

Words

Head

Bed



Materials Needed

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow



Also Promotes

Cognitive

Self-Regulation

Physical/Health

BEGIN: [*Invite a toddler to share a book with you. Point to the picture and the words on the cover.*]

ASK: [*Show book cover.*]

What's happening in this picture?

[*Engage toddler in a conversation about monkeys jumping on the bed. Point to, or encourage toddler to point to, specific monkeys you describe.*]

EXPLAIN: [*Point to words when you tell the book's title.*]

Our book is about monkeys jumping on the bed. It is called *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*. These words tell us the title of our book.

Let's open the book to find out what happens with the monkeys!

ASK: Would you like to hold the book on your lap?

[*Pause for the toddler's response.*]

ACT: [*Depending upon the toddler's response, hold the book or place it on his/her lap.*]

[*If the toddler opens the book to page two or three, gently turn the pages to the beginning of the story.*]

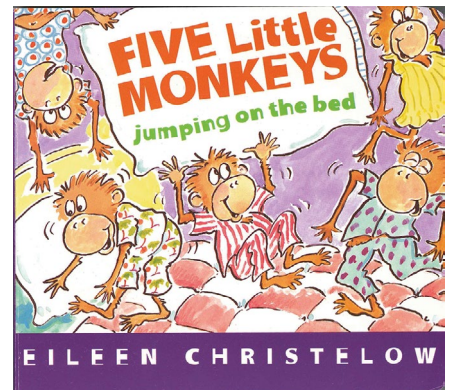
Our book begins here. I can help you turn the pages.

[*Read the first page as you point to the pictures of the monkeys bathing, dressing, and brushing their teeth as they get ready for bed. Point to words as you read each.*]

A toddler may point to a picture and talk about his/her home routines, such as taking a bath. Repeat and extend a toddler's comments. Example: "The monkeys have bubbles in the bath. You have bubbles in your bath, too!"

Encourage the toddler to feel the edge of the next page and to turn it with his/her fingers.

[*Point to the five monkeys in the bed.*]





Option 1 continued

All the monkeys are in one bed.

[Emphasize the following sentences when you read the next two pages: “Five little monkeys jumped on the bed. One fell off and bumped his head.” Pause for the toddler to comment.]

EXPLAIN: Some words sound alike. Bed and head sound alike.

[Repeat the words bed and head. The toddler may wish to say the words with you.]

ACT: *[Continue to read, pointing to each word you say it. The toddler may wish to fill in the word head.]*

RECAP: Our book has pictures and words. The words told us what was happening in the pictures. Some of the words sounded alike. What word in our story sounded like the word bed? (head)

What to Look For—Option 1

Toddlers enjoy humor and generally like to use a loud voice to say “No more monkeys jumping on the bed!” Supporting an opportunity for a toddler to use a loud voice for one phrase and then shift to a normal talking voice is good practice in self-regulation. You may wish to demonstrate using a louder and then a normal voice for key phrases. Join the toddler in laughing about the humor in the book!

If the toddler stands and starts to jump, it may be his/her way of showing you an understanding of the word jump. Simply say “I see you are jumping like the monkeys. You know what it means to jump. Please sit next to me so you can talk about the pictures in our book.”

Talk about pictures the toddler points to. Example: A toddler may be interested in the picture that shows two monkeys crying. You could ask “What’s happening in this picture?” The toddler may say “sad” or “he is crying.”

Some toddlers are familiar with number words, but they are not expected to count the monkeys in the book.

You may see a toddler return to the book on his/her own, look at the pictures, and say some of the words.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If a toddler finds it challenging to maintain focus during the entire book, skip several pages in the middle. ■ If a toddler is not ready to or interested in managing the pages, hold the book and encourage him/her to help turn pages.

Enrichment ■ If time and toddler interest permit, review parts of the story that are of particular interest to the toddler. ■ At the conclusion of the book, draw attention to two pictures that show all of the monkeys in one bed at the beginning and end of the book.

24–36 Months

Option 2 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Awareness of print and pictures

Receptive language
Expressive language

A toddler retells a familiar story by describing pictures and helping a caregiver connect book text to pictures.



Key Concepts

Words
Pictures



Materials Needed

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow

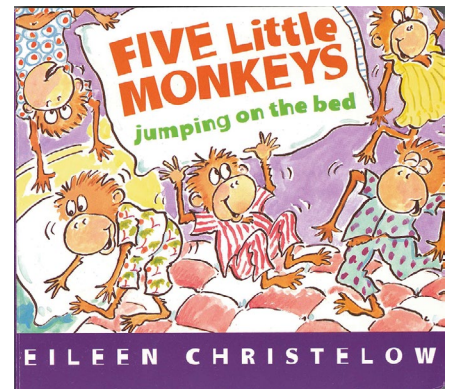


Also Promotes

Cognitive
Physical/Health

This activity option is for a toddler who is familiar with the book through participation in Option 1 or a similar book sharing. The activity could be offered with a different, richly-illustrated book the toddler knows well.

Invite a toddler to help you remember what happens in a story told in a book. Show the book cover. Encourage the toddler to hold the book. Explain that we will look at pictures in the book to tell what is happening in the story. Use the following approach, beginning with the book cover:



- Invite the toddler to tell what is happening in a picture. Encourage the toddler to point to specific images in a picture that he/she describes. Look at and discuss pictures in proper sequence.
- After the toddler tells about a picture, point to and say the corresponding book text. Draw attention to your reading. Example: "I am going to read the words on our page."
- If the book text describes something the toddler did not describe, use your own words to include this information about the picture.
- Repeat one word in the book text that is shown in the picture. Encourage the toddler to point to the corresponding picture. Example: "Jumping. Let's point to each of the monkeys that is jumping."

Conclude the session by describing how the toddler helped us remember the story by telling what is happening in the pictures. The words on each page also told us what is happening in a picture.

What to Look For—Option 2

Toddlers enjoy retelling favorite book stories. This activity promotes expressive language skills while also helping toddlers strengthen their understanding of how book text and pictures work together to tell a story.

If a toddler volunteers the well-known repetitive phrase in this book ("No more monkeys jumping on the bed!") without any prompting, build on the toddler's familiarity with the text by pointing to the corresponding words. The intent is to help the toddler become aware of text that says what he/she said, and not to learn specific words or how to read.

**Option 2 continued**

If a toddler seems uncomfortable with the retelling process, use Extra Support tips suggested below and enthusiastically support a toddler's brief, general descriptions of a picture. Asking a toddler to describe specific images in a picture may be too challenging. The toddler may offer more description of a picture as you move through the book's pages/pictures or in a later book sharing.

 **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2**

Extra support ■ If the toddler seems uncertain about how to tell what is happening in a picture, demonstrate how to tell about a picture by offering a general description, such as "This picture shows monkeys jumping on a bed!" Then point to and describe 1–2 specific images in the picture. ■ A toddler may benefit from a follow-up prompt to your invitation to describe a picture, such as "What are the monkeys doing in this picture?"

Enrichment ■ Invite the toddler to say the repetitive phrase ("No more monkeys jumping on the bed!") with you or alone. ■ Open the book to any page that includes text. Encourage the toddler to point to the words.

**Interest Area**

Materials Needed: books with repeated phrases, such as *Little Red Hen*; basket; monkey finger puppets

Place several familiar books with repetitive phrases in a basket on a rug with cushions. Encourage toddlers to look at the books during play periods. Emphasize the repetitive phrase of a story.

Offer the monkey finger puppets and remind toddlers of the phrase, "No more monkeys jumping on the bed." Encourage toddlers to use the puppets to show monkeys jumping and then stopping the jumping actions when saying the repetitive phrase. This supports self-regulation.

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

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several songs and books, such as *Are You My Mother?* by P.D. Eastman, *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin Jr., *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons* by James Dean

In addition to offering Options 1 or 2, toddlers will enjoy the book *Are You My Mother?* by P.D. Eastman because of the bird's search for his mother and the repeated refrain. Encourage toddlers to say some of the book's words with you.

Toddlers, preschool-age children, and older children will enjoy hearing and remembering the words to the book *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin Jr.

Preschool-age children will enjoy learning the words to *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons* by James Dean. Emphasize repeated phrases, such as "Did Pete cry?" "Goodness, no!" and "Buttons come and buttons go."

Infants will enjoy listening to you sing the same song each day. Even though an infant is not singing with you, he/she is beginning to remember the tune and the words. Identify several songs and books to review often with infants. Singing to an infant can be more effective for language development than recorded music.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal Problem-solving

Toddlers walk under a pretend ribbon waterfall held at a level of their choice.



Key Concepts Under



Materials Needed

Push toys (see Be Prepared)
Cardboard tube or small hula hoop
Fabric or yarn ribbons



Also Promotes

Physical/Health
Self-Regulation
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Attach colorful, textured ribbons to a small hula hoop or cardboard tube, such as a tube previously used to hold wrapping paper. Fasten each ribbon or fabric strip with strong tape or a knot. Use ribbons of approximately equal length. Provide push toys, such as toddler-size shopping carts or a rolling popper.

Invite several toddlers at a time to join you in going under the ribbons. Explain the ribbons are a pretend waterfall. Encourage toddlers to push a toy under the ribbon waterfall, one at a time. Stand in an open area where you can easily see all participating toddlers.

Ask each child whether he/she would like no ribbons, a little ribbon, or lots of ribbons. Describe a toddler's request and your corresponding actions with the ribbons. Example: "Clara wants no ribbons. I will lift the ribbon up high. Okay, Clara, now you can go under our ribbon waterfall. The ribbons will not touch you." Generally, toddlers will enjoy the sensation of ribbons lightly touching their arms and head when they go under the pretend waterfall. But some toddlers may not want ribbons to touch them.

Emphasize the word under as you describe each child's walk under the ribbon waterfall. Say each child's name as he/she goes under the ribbons. Example: "Thomas is going under our ribbon waterfall."

If there are differences in whether and how much the ribbons touch toddlers, briefly describe and demonstrate the differences at the conclusion of the activity. Emphasize how the ribbon waterfall was higher or lower in relation to our bodies.

👁️ What to Look For—Option 1

Young children develop awareness of spatial relationships through freedom to explore spaces and move their bodies in different ways, such as climbing up, crawling over, and getting down from climbing equipment. Toddlers can also strengthen their understanding of spatial relationships through guided play. The current activity promotes the concept of under through movement under a pretend waterfall. It is helpful for toddlers to repeatedly hear the word under as part of the activity.

An important part of a toddler's experience in the activity is making a choice about whether or how much the ribbons touch the toddler while going under the waterfall. Describe the three options described in the activity so each toddler can make a choice in advance of going under the ribbons. Anticipate that some toddlers may want a contrast of experience with the ribbons. Example: light touch the first time, lots of ribbons the second time.

**Option 1 continued**

It is fine if toddlers wish to reach up and touch the ribbons with their fingers. Discourage grasping or holding onto the ribbons. Explain that pulling on the ribbons will break the waterfall (or car wash; see Enrichment tip).

 **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

Extra support ■ If pushing a toy under the pretend waterfall seems too challenging, invite a child to carry a doll or animal figure under the ribbons. ■ Help with spatial problem-solving as needed. Example: if a child gets his/her cart against a wall and cannot move forward, encourage the toddler to try a “pull” motion that you also may wish to demonstrate.

Enrichment ■ If available, provide riding toys for toddlers to “drive” under a pretend automated ribbon car wash. Create a road for toddlers to follow, with one child at a time riding under the ribbons.



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Problem-solving

Toddlers move a toy turtle in different spatial arrangements in relation to their bodies.



Key Concepts

In
Across



Materials Needed

2 yards of blue fabric (see Be Prepared)
Masking tape
Soft turtles—1 per toddler and caregiver



Also Promotes

Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: The activity promotes spatial awareness by inviting toddlers to move with a toy over and under a length of cloth. Secure blue fabric that is two yards long. The fabric is placed on the floor as a pretend river or stream during (not in advance of) the activity. Vinyl beanbags are suggested; hard animal figures are not a good material for this activity.

BEGIN: [*Invite 2–4 toddlers to join you to move a toy turtle in different ways. Sit on the floor facing the toddlers. Give each toddler a toy turtle.*]

EXPLAIN: Each of us has one turtle. We are going to play a fun game by moving our toy turtles and moving our bodies.

Let's get our turtles moving! I will show some ways we can move our turtles.

ACT: [*From a seated position, describe and demonstrate ways to move the toy turtle. Possibilities include:*

- *Lift our turtle up high.*
- *Put our turtle on your lap.*
- *Put our turtle on top of our head.*
- *Give our turtle a hug.*
- *Stretch our legs out straight. Place our turtle next to one leg.*
- *Place our turtle next to a shoe.*]

EXPLAIN: Now we are going to move our turtles across a pretend river (or stream). A river has moving water.

[*Spread the fabric on the floor. Affix to the floor with masking tape. Invite toddlers to stand with you on one side of the fabric.*]

Let's pretend our turtles want to find out what is on the other side of our river. Our turtles want to go across the river. We can help our turtles get to the other side of the river.

ACT: [*Encourage toddlers to move their turtle over the river in a way each wishes. Describe each toddler's approach. Example: "Rian is walking across the water and holding his turtle up high."*]

Now our turtles want to be in the water. They want to swim around. Let's all get in our pretend river and help our turtles go swimming!

[*Demonstrate swimming actions with your turtle. Describe each toddler's efforts.*]

I think our turtles are ready for a rest. Let's help our turtles calm down.

**Option 2 continued**

[Demonstrate rocking your turtle by swaying it back and forth in your arms. Describe each toddler's actions. Example: "Eli is rocking his turtle to sleep. Eli's turtle is very tired. Shhhhhhh."]

RECAP: [Describe what happened during the activity. Emphasize how we went across the river and then went in the river.]

👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

This activity option promotes awareness of spatial relationships through active movement and attention to the concepts of across and in. The first segment of the activity supports self-regulation skills, especially concentration, and motor skills. Motor skills are also central to the activity's second segment, which uses active movement to support understandings of over and in.

Anticipate differences in how toddlers manage their movement across and in the pretend river. Some may easily manipulate their soft turtle (jump, swim) while walking, whereas other toddlers may simply walk while holding their toy steady or prefer to walk without a toy.

📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Offer as many actions in the first segment as toddlers seem interested in pursuing.
■ Demonstrate some options for going across the river, especially swimming and walking, if toddlers seem uncertain about what to do.

Enrichment ■ Talk about other ways to go across the river, such as paddling a pretend boat. ■ Another way to emphasize the concept of across is to create a little bridge with cardboard blocks that can be used for moving turtles across the water. ■ If toddlers are familiar with a tunnel, talk about how a tunnel could be used to go under the river.

24–36 Months

Option 3 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Problem-solving

Toddlers walk around a pretend pond, carrying a toy fish in their hand that is closest to the pond, and then reverse their direction of walking.



Key Concepts

In
Around
Other



Materials Needed

Cloth fish—1 per toddler (see Be Prepared)
2 yards of blue fabric
Carpet squares—1 per toddler



Also Promotes

Physical/Health
Self-Regulation
Communication/Language



Optional Reading

In the Small, Small Pond by
Denise Fleming

Be Prepared: Bunch up the fabric to create a round pretend pond. Arrange carpet squares in a circle around the pretend pond. Turtle beanbags may be used as an alternative to cloth fish. Make up a simple song about fish swimming in a pond.

Invite several toddlers to join you to play at a pretend pond. Show how the carpet squares go around the pond. Explain that a pond has water and fish can live in a pond.

Give one cloth fish to each toddler. Invite toddlers to walk on the carpet squares around the pond with their fish. Encourage toddlers to hold the fish with their hand that is closest to the pond and pretend our fish is swimming in the pond. Sing your simple song about fish swimming in a pond.



Invite toddlers to briefly stop walking and then reverse the direction of walking around the pond. Demonstrate and explain how we put our fish in our other hand when we walk the other way around our pretend pond. Sing your song again.

Conclude the activity by describing what happened. Emphasize we walked around our pretend pond. Then we stopped and walked the other way around the pond. We put our fish in our other hand when we walked the other way around the pond.

What to Look For—Option 3

The carpet squares are intended as a guide for walking around the pond. Omit the squares if they are not helpful with toddlers' spatial connection to the pond or seem to distract attention from the pond.

Provide sufficient pause and explanation for changing the walking direction. Changing the walking direction around the pretend pond, including putting the toy fish in our other hand (which is now closest to the pond), offers important support for spatial awareness skills emphasized in this activity. You may wish to change direction a second time if it seems toddlers would benefit from more practice in changing our orientation to the pond.

If toddlers start to run or seem to have difficulty focusing on walking around the pretend pond, it may be helpful to provide some brief gross motor movements. Pause the pretend pond activity and lead toddlers in some actions, such as pretending to swim while standing in place or reaching high with our arms.

**Option 3 continued** More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Explain why we put our fish in our other hand when we walk the other way around our pretend pond. We want our fish to be in our hand closest to the water. Demonstrate how our hand closest to our pretend pond changes when we walk the other way around the pond.

Enrichment ■ Toddlers may enjoy exchanging fish and walking again around the pond. ■ Share the optional book. Emphasize direction words as you talk about the pictures. Example: One picture shows tadpoles underwater.

 Interest Area

Materials Needed: blocks, toy animals or cars, 8" x 11" felt squares, basket, plush animals, *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins, fabric

In the block area create a small bridge for toy animals or cars as a way to foster an extension of Option 2. Place small blocks and animal figures on a low surface with 8" x 11" felt squares. Provide a basket of plush animals for toddlers to continue the game of going across the river. Describe toddlers' actions. Example: "Look at Suni! She is helping her little dog swim across the river!" Sit with several toddlers at a time to look at pictures in the book *Rosie's Walk*. On another day, hold two corners of the fabric while another adult holds the opposite side. Invite toddlers to go under the cloth river with or without toys. Raise the fabric to allow the children to walk (vs. crawl) under the cloth river. Lower the fabric if children wish to crawl or scoot under.

 Family Child Care

Materials Needed: fabric, *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins

Preschool-age children will enjoy a game of *Over and Under* with the fabric offered in the Interest Area suggestion. Older children may enjoy holding the corners of a pillowcase-size cloth to create an arch toddlers may go under. Continue *Over and Under* play outdoors. Share the book *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins. Encourage children to point to pictures of Rosie going over or under.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal Concentration

Toddlers watch a teddy bear do movements suggested in a song.



Key Concepts

Song
Move
Turn around
High
Low



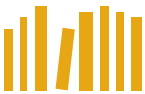
Materials Needed

Teddy bear



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Optional Reading

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear by Wendy Straw

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear by Annie Kubler

Revised: 6/30/2023

Be Prepared: Become familiar with the words and actions of the song “Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, Turn Around.” The books suggested in Optional Reading are one source. It is recommended you not use a video or CD for the activity because toddlers want to observe and interact with you!

BEGIN: *[Invite several toddlers to join you for a song about a teddy bear. Display the teddy bear.]*

We are going to hear a song about a teddy bear. The song tells the teddy bear how to move its body.

EXPLAIN: The teddy bear is going to turn around.

[Demonstrate turning around with the teddy bear.]

The teddy bear is going to reach up high.

[Demonstrate reaching high with the teddy bear.]

The teddy bear is going to bend down low.

[Demonstrate bending down with the teddy bear.]

I am going to sing the song about the teddy bear.

ASK: Do you think the teddy bear will be able to do all of these movements with its body?

ACT: Please use your eyes to watch.

[Point to your eyes.]

Please use your ears to listen to the song.

[Point to your ears.]

Sing the words of the song as you demonstrate the corresponding actions with the teddy bear. Sing words clearly and at a pace that allows children to hear each word. Emphasize with your words and actions the movements of the teddy bear, including “turn around,” “high,” and “low.” Smile and look at each toddler as you sing.]





Option 1 continued

- ASK:**
- Did the teddy bear do everything the song said to do?
 - Should we sing and watch the teddy bear do the movements one more time?

[Repeat the song with the teddy bear if two or more toddlers respond positively.]

RECAP: Today we listened to a song about a teddy bear. The teddy bear moved the way the song said to move. The song said to turn around and the teddy bear turned around. Let's all turn around. The teddy bear can be our leader!

[Use the teddy bear to lead toddlers in turning around.]



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Concentration

Toddlers engage in movements suggested in a song and demonstrated by a teddy bear.



Key Concepts

Song
Move
Turn around
High
Low



Materials Needed

Teddy bear



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Optional Reading

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear by Wendy Straw

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear by Annie Kubler

Revised: 6/30/2023

Be Prepared: Become familiar with the words and actions of the song “Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, Turn Around.” The books suggested in Optional Reading are one source.

Invite several toddlers to join you in learning a song about a teddy bear. Introduce or review the song and teddy bear movements with the approach suggested in Option 1. Remember to sing the song slowly and clearly while demonstrating the movements with the teddy bear. Encourage toddlers to pay attention by watching with their eyes and listening with their ears.



After singing the song and demonstrating the movements, invite toddlers to move their bodies in the ways suggested in the song: turn around, reach high, bend low.

Encourage toddlers to participate in the movements one more time as you sing. This time, invite toddlers to sing the song with you.

Conclude the session by commenting on how toddlers paid attention to the song and teddy bear movements by watching with their eyes and listening with their ears.

👁️ What to Look For—Options 1–2

This simple set of activities supports the development of several related skills: paying attention to movements suggested in a song, concepts (high, low, turn around), and motor skills involved in the suggested movements, spatial skills for turning around, and singing a song. The concentration skills are a primary focus of the activity and useful for toddlers to practice. Pay close attention to toddlers’ actions in Option 2 and offer to repeat aspects that seem particularly challenging. Some toddlers are unlikely to sing at the same time as they move their bodies in Option 2. Some toddlers may prefer to watch their peers participate in Option 2. Positively acknowledge all forms of appropriate participation.

📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Pause between each verse (movement) to help toddlers think about actions and, in Option 2, plan how to move. ■ It may be helpful for toddlers to practice the movements with the teddy bear.

Enrichment ■ Increase slightly the tempo when toddlers are familiar with the song. Invite toddlers to sing the song fast, then slow. ■ Ask toddlers to recall the motions and their sequence. Example: “What is the first way the teddy bear moves in our song?” “What does the teddy bear do after he turns around? What comes next?”



Interest Area

Materials Needed: several teddy bears or other stuffed animals; items for putting a teddy bear to bed, such as pajamas, bottle or dishes/spoon for porridge, blanket, pillow, bed

Introduce toddlers to the popular version of the “Teddy Bear” song that includes the teddy bear going to bed. Invite toddlers to play with teddy bears in the dramatic play area. Toddlers may choose to act out some of the movements in the song. Encourage toddlers to pretend to put their bears to bed.



Family Child Care

Materials Needed: stuffed animals

Participating in song and movement activities is enjoyable for children of all ages. Infants will enjoy watching and being part of Option 1 or 2. You may wish to provide stuffed animals for each child and baby to hold during the song. Invite older children to think of new movements for the teddy bear. Some children may also enjoy singing the song with a new character, such as a dinosaur or another favorite animal. A dinosaur, for example, may do some of the teddy bear movements or try new movements, such stomping feet and chomping teeth.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Social interaction skills
Awareness of emotions

Toddlers participate in a book sharing about playing together and becoming friends.



Key Concepts

Play together
Friends
Share



Materials Needed

Llama Llama Time to Share
by Anna Dewdney



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Self-Regulation

BEGIN: [Invite 3–4 toddlers to join you in reading a book. You may wish to sing a song as toddlers arrive, such as “The More We Get Together.” Welcome each child to the gathering by name.]

We like to read about Llama Llama. Our Llama Llama book today is about sharing.

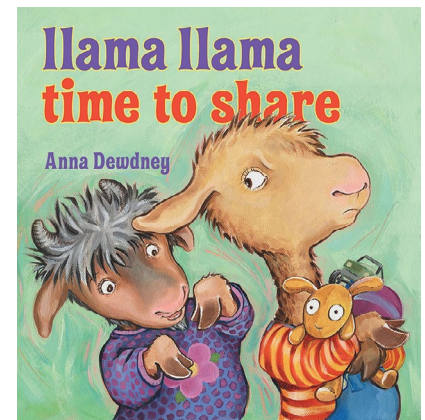
[Display book cover and point to Llama Llama and the other llama as you describe each.]

Llama Llama is holding a lot of toys. Here is another llama in our picture with no toys.

Do you think Llama Llama will share some of his toys with the other llama?

[Pause for and acknowledge toddlers’ responses.]

Let’s open our book to find out!



ACT: [Read the book text and add your own words to describe pictures and key parts of the story, including the following:

- Early in the story, emphasize Llama Llama’s reactions to someone else playing with his toys. Example: “Nelly Gnu is playing with Llama Llama’s blocks. Llama Llama is watching her play. Look at his face. Is Llama Llama happy? Why not?”
- Point out how Llama Llama finds a way to play with Nelly Gnu and her block town by including a favorite toy, Fuzzy Llama.
- Draw attention to Llama Llama’s reaction to Nelly Gnu using Fuzzy Llama to play with Baby Gnu. Examples: “Why did Llama Llama pull on Fuzzy Llama?” “What did Llama Llama and Nelly Gnu feel after Fuzzy Llama’s arm came off?”
- Emphasize how Llama Llama and Nelly Gnu did different things when they made a cake together. Nelly Gnu mixed and Llama Llama baked. Also, Llama Llama wanted to share other things after making the cake with Nelly Gnu. He shared his toy Fuzzy Llama.
- Point out how Llama Llama and Nelly Gnu became friends by playing together.]

**Option 1 continued**

RECAP: Llama Llama did not want to share his toys with Nelly Gnu when she came to his house. He really did not want to share Fuzzy Llama. What happened? (pulled toy away from Nelly Gnu and the toy's arm came off!) Then Llama Llama and Nelly Gnu had fun making a pretend cake together, and Llama Llama shared his toy, Fuzzy Llama, with Nelly Gnu. They became friends.

👁️ What to Look For—Option 1

The themes of sharing and playing together will be of interest to most toddlers. Toddlers are likely to differ in what aspects of the story are of interest. Some may readily connect with the book characters' reactions to events, whereas other toddlers may be most attentive to the drama surrounding Fuzzy Llama. Emotion knowledge is in an early point of development at this age and the several emotion questions suggested in the activity description may be challenging for some toddlers to think about. Recall questions will be easier for most toddlers to manage and can help toddlers appreciate the value of sharing toys and activities described in the book.

📈 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ The book text uses the word disaster when Fuzzy Llama's arm comes off. Explain that a disaster means something bad has happened, like an accident.

Enrichment ■ Describe instances of toddlers playing together in your room that involved each child doing a different part of the play the way that Llama Llama and Nelly Gnu did different parts of the cake baking.

24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Social interaction skills

Toddlers work with play dough, with opportunities to notice each other's actions and share tools.



Key Concepts

Share



Materials Needed

Play dough—1 ball per toddler (see Be Prepared)
Tools for manipulating play dough (see Be Prepared)



Also Promotes

Physical/Health
Self-Regulation



Optional Reading

Llama Llama Time to Share
by Anna Dewdney

Be Prepared: Form balls of dough about the size of a toddler's hand. Secure one of each tool commonly used in your room for manipulating play dough. Consider adding one item not commonly used or provided. A novel tool can facilitate practice in sharing. Arrange the tools in the center of a low table within easy reach of toddlers.

Invite 3–4 toddlers to work with play dough at a low table. Give each child a ball of dough and explain that we can use one tool at a time with our play dough. We put a tool in the middle of the table after we are done using it. Someone else at our table may wish to use the tool. We share our tools by putting them in the middle of the table.



As the toddlers play, talk with them about their actions. Describe what you see each toddler doing with their play dough.

Example: "Myatt is rolling his play dough." Refrain from asking toddlers what they are making. The activity is intended as exploratory and toddlers may not have a product in mind.

Throughout the activity, gently encourage toddlers to put a tool in the middle of the table after they are done using it. Remind toddlers that someone else may wish to use the tool. We do not keep a tool after we are done using it. Describe instances of a toddler returning a tool to the middle of the table. Remind toddlers that this is one of the ways we can share our things.

👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

Help toddlers develop peer social interaction skills with this activity by describing what each toddler is doing. Your comments may nudge toddlers to notice how a peer is working with play dough.

Toddlers differ considerably in their readiness to share items, and the practice of taking turns with a desired item takes time to develop. The current activity promotes the concept of sharing items through the practice of returning tools to the middle of the table after they are used, so others might also use them. Returning a tool to the middle of the table may be a challenging action for toddlers who prefer to keep or hoard materials in their own activity space.



Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Suggest 1–2 different ways for a toddler to work with the play dough if he/she seems uncertain about what to do. Some toddlers may wish to imitate what another toddler is doing.

Enrichment ■ Encourage a toddler to describe what he/she is doing (not making) with the play dough or what he/she sees another child doing with the play dough.



Interest Area

Materials Needed: crayons, drawing paper

Arrange the crayons in the middle of a low table. Invite several toddlers to draw whatever each wishes to draw. Encourage toddlers to share the crayons by putting a crayon in the middle of the table when they are done using it (not keeping it). This is consistent with the Option 2 provision for sharing items. Be available to provide support if needed.



Family Child Care

Materials Needed: variety of blocks

Invite an older toddler(s) and preschool-age child(ren) in your setting to build something together with blocks. One possibility is for each child to build one part of a larger arrangement. Example: one child uses blocks to build a house and another child uses blocks to make a road to the house or a garage next to the house. Another possibility is for children to build one structure together, deciding what they want to make and taking turns contributing to the building. The second possibility involves more advanced skills in sharing.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Fine motor development

Toddlers explore making scribbles, lines, and circles with markers on paper.



Key Concepts

Marks

Lines

Circles



Materials Needed

- Roll of white paper
- Masking tape
- Art smocks—1 per toddler
- 12 washable, chubby-size markers in primary colors
- 2 cups for holding markers
- Basket or dish for the marker lids



Also Promotes

- Communication/Language
- Cognitive

Be Prepared: The activity is aimed at helping toddlers see the effect of putting a marker on paper. The focus is on scribbles, lines, and circles. There also is support for children's recognition of colors. The activity is not a lesson in drawing or copying an image of something. Avoid asking questions, such as "What are you drawing?" or comments, such as "Your picture looks like a cat." The activity emphasizes children's motions with their markers.

Put markers of different colors in several cups. Keep the markers out of reach until you are ready to guide the activity. Cover the top of a low table with white paper. Tape the ends to prevent it from moving. If toddlers seem interested in your work in taping the paper, describe each step of what you are doing. Toddlers will be interested in your actions and description.

BEGIN: [*Invite several toddlers to the table for coloring. Help each toddler put on a smock or craft apron.*]

Let's all color together.

ASK: [*Hold and point to a marker.*]

What is this called?
(a marker)

EXPLAIN: We can make lots of marks on our paper today.

[*Point to tip of the marker.*]

Remember, this is called the marker tip. The tip goes on the paper.

[*Demonstrate by making a small mark on the paper. Also demonstrate the types of marks described below.*]

We can move a marker on our paper in different ways. Our marks may go up and down, or from side to side. We can scribble or go around and around. You may color on the paper any way you like.

We have many different colors of markers. You may choose a color you like.

[*Invite each toddler to select one marker from a cup. State the name of the color selected by each toddler. Example: "Aiden, you picked a blue marker." Remove marker lids and place in a basket or dish for safekeeping. Sit or kneel so you are at children's eye level.*]



**Option 1 continued**

ACT: *[Encourage toddlers to make marks on the paper. Use your marker to scribble and make lines and circles. Do not divert children from making scribbles, lines, and/or circles by drawing or providing a picture of a flower, cat, person, or some other more elaborate images.]*

Describe toddlers' efforts with markers. Examples: "When we push the marker along the paper it leaves color." "We are using a lot of colors on the paper."

Comment on the colors of marks. Example: "Tyrone's marks are red. Sherri's marks are blue."

Point to any circular shapes on the paper. Use your finger to trace a circle or circular shape as you describe it. Examples: "Trina, you used your marker to go around. Your line starts here and goes around like a circle." "Aiden, some of your marks look like circles."

Point to and describe lines on the paper. Example: "I see some really long lines here. This line is long. Here is a short line." Trace a line with your finger and describe it. Example: "This long green line reaches from here to here."

Acknowledge and expand on children's utterances about their efforts or the emerging picture. Example: "Yes, Trina, it is a big one. We are making a big picture together with different colors, scribbles, and lines."]

ASK: Would you like to use a different color? We have some other colors you could use.

[Point to and say the names of several of the colors available. If a child opts for a different color, say the color she/he is relinquishing and the color she/he is taking. Example: "You were making yellow marks. Now you have a marker that will make green marks."]

ACT: *[Print each toddler's name next to part of his/her coloring. Say the toddler's name aloud as you print neatly.]*

RECAP: We made a lot of different marks together. We put different colors on the paper. We moved the markers on our paper to make scribbles and lines. Now we are finished. We will put the lids on our markers and our markers will go into the basket.

[You might wish to add a title to the work, such as "We Color Together" and hang the paper in the room.]

👁️ What to Look For—Option 1

Fine motor skills differ considerably across young children. Some toddlers may promptly begin using markers. Other toddlers may need gentle encouragement to begin making marks on paper.

You are likely to see toddlers make scribbles and probably experiment with different movements of their markers. With repeated opportunities to use markers, toddlers at this age may begin to be more intentional with their use of markers. For several weeks a toddler's marks may look similar, with repeated lines or circular shapes. Over time, the circle shapes may begin to emerge from scribbles. It is not necessary to teach a toddler how to draw a circle, but simply to notice it and talk with the child about the shape of marks on the paper.

**Option 1 continued**

Some toddlers will favor a particular color, perhaps without knowing the color name. It is fine if a child uses one color repeatedly.

A small icon of a staircase with three steps, representing scaffolding.**More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

Extra support ■ If toddlers are new to markers, you might begin by giving one marker to each toddler rather than offer color options. ■ Generally, standing is best for using markers but some toddlers may prefer to sit on a chair. ■ Help each toddler find a place at the table where he/she has space for large marks. ■ If toddlers put the marker on their skin, give a gentle reminder: “Marker goes on paper.” ■ Keep a small damp cloth at the table to wipe off a mark on a toddler who may be distressed at getting a mark(s) on his/her skin. ■ If a toddler asks you to draw a specific object, politely decline and encourage the toddler to make his/her own marks.

Enrichment ■ Toddlers who know color names may enjoy asking for a particular color. ■ Demonstrate the effect of coloring one color over another. ■ Encourage a toddler to explore making lines of different lengths. ■ Ask a toddler if he/she wants to move the marker “around and around” to make a circle.



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Fine motor development

Toddlers explore coloring with crayons on the textured surfaces of boxes.



Key Concepts

Scribble
Bumpy



Materials Needed

4 large cardboard boxes
Chubby crayons



Also Promotes

Cognitive
Communication/Language

Support toddlers' motor development by introducing the element of texture to drawing. Gather large cardboard boxes and invite toddlers to pretend the boxes are a boat or a car. We can color on our pretend boat or car. You also may wish to provide several small boxes, as suggested in an Extra Support tip.

Encourage toddlers to scribble side to side and in circular motions to increase awareness of specific movements with a crayon. Draw attention to the bumpy surface of cardboard. This can help toddlers discover that adding pressure to the crayon produces a clear mark.

After toddlers color on the bumpy cardboard, gather the crayons. Toddlers will enjoy playing with the boxes as make-believe cars or boats. Generally two toddlers can fit in a box car. A smaller box, such as a shoebox, could be used to color a home for an animal figure or doll.

This activity may continue for days. More color can be added to the boxes and they can be set out in different areas of the room to suggest different uses.

👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

Providing boxes to color gives toddlers new experiences with borders. Drawing on a piece of paper is limited to one defined space. A box can be colored outside or inside, turned over, or turned on end. See Extra Support tips if the space possibilities seem too challenging to a toddler.

Drawing attention to the bumpy surface of a box can help toddlers explore using more pressure with their crayon. Give toddlers time to discover on their own what happens when they press harder on their crayon. The intent of the activity is to draw on a textured surface. Toddlers are not expected to draw specific features of a car or boat. Omit the suggestion that the boxes represent a car or boat if this detracts from toddlers' drawing.

The activity moves from support for fine motor to gross motor when the boxes are offered as materials for play. Awareness of spatial relationships is emphasized when toddlers figure out how to put their body in a box.

📊 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Provide small boxes on a table for toddlers who want to explore coloring on a smaller textured surface. A large box for coloring initially may be intimidating. ■ Suggest a side of a box for beginning work if a toddler seems confused about where to begin coloring.

Enrichment ■ For a related outdoor activity, support toddlers in drawing with chalk on hard surfaces. A toddler could draw a very long road, or a house larger than his/her body.



24–36 Months

Option 3 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Fine motor development

Toddlers use crayons or markers to draw a road or path for small toys.



Key Concepts

Line



Materials Needed

1 roll paper

Tape

Chubby crayons and/or markers

Animal figures or small toy vehicles



Also Promotes

Communication/Language

Cognitive

Select a focus for this coloring activity, based on the interests of toddlers: a road for cars to travel on or a path for animals to walk on. Invite 2–3 toddlers to participate. Unroll paper on the floor and tape the ends. Place a set of animal figures or small vehicles along the length of the paper, depending on toddlers' interests. Sit with toddlers. Suggest they color some lines on the paper for a pretend road the toy cars can travel on or a path for the animals to walk on. Encourage toddlers to use long, bold marks to help them see the effect of holding and moving the marker (or crayon) in a specific way.

Move 1–2 of the toys (animals or small vehicles) near the roads/paths as you talk with toddlers about its pretend purpose. Encourage toddlers to move a toy along the road/path. They may decide to extend the road/path or add a new road/path. Toddlers may wish to continue playing with the toys on the paper after you have collected the drawing materials.

What to Look For—Option 3

Some toddlers may lie down on the floor to make the marks. Toddlers will use muscles in the upper body to maintain a position for coloring on the floor. You may see toddlers who prefer a sitting position on the floor.

Remind toddlers the crayons are to color the paper, not the toys. Repeating a phrase, such as “Crayons are for paper.” Saying the phrase in a friendly tone helps toddlers remember, similar to an adult recalling words in a commercial.

Your gentle, ongoing guidance is needed for this activity.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If it appears the figures or vehicles do not add to the activity, simply move them aside.

Enrichment ■ Suggest toddlers color garages or parking lots (for toy vehicles) or places, such as a barn, where animals could live.



Interest Area

Materials Needed: large paper, tape, crayons, string

Prepare a crayon table that toddlers may use independently. Lay a large paper on a table top and secure it with tape. Tie 30" of string to a chubby crayon. Put a piece of tape over the tied string to prevent it from slipping off the crayon. Tape the loose end of the string to the edge of the table. Repeat with three more crayons. Space the crayons to allow toddlers room to make colored marks. The activity uses crayons rather than markers because toddlers are less likely to mark their skin and clothes with crayon.



Family Child Care

Materials Needed: crayons, paper, tape, markers

Children of different ages in your setting will benefit from different types of support for using markers (or crayons). If an infant shows interest in coloring, consider taping paper to a high chair tray and providing one chubby crayon. Stay in close proximity to the infant to talk about his/her movements of the crayon and to ensure the infant does not chew on the crayon. Chubby crayons work well for younger toddlers (12–24 months).

Encourage preschool-age children to experiment with making large and small circles. Some children will be interested in making an item, such as a truck or person, whereas other children will scribble. Older children may appreciate a blank book made by fastening paper together. Some preschool-age and older children may represent an aspect of family life or playing with friends. A book format will help children to make several pictures that are related.