



**Communication/
Language**

Exploring Words

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on bedtime practices of construction trucks with human-like characteristics.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers describe and show how toy construction trucks featured in book illustrations work.



Cognitive

Solving Problems

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers explore spatial concepts in a book about two cats.
- Option 2** (OO) A toddler practices the use of spatial concepts in guided play with blocks and toy vehicles.



Self-Regulation

Calming Down

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers watch a caregiver calm down by pretending to be a cornstalk moving in the wind.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers participate in guided practice of a calming-down activity by pretending to be a cornstalk moving in strong and then gentle wind.
- Option 3** (IG) Toddlers practice a calming-down activity by pretending to be a cornstalk moving in strong and then gentle wind, with minimal caregiver guidance.



Social-Emotional

Exploring Feelings

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers participate in a book sharing on names of different feelings and ways to manage some feelings.
- Option 2** (OO) A toddler uses dolls that represent different emotions to talk about happy, angry, frightened, and sad.



Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

- Option 1** (IG) Toddlers move shakers in different positions as part of listening to a song.
- Option 2** (IG) Toddlers practice moving and stop moving a shaker as part of listening to a recorded song.
- Option 3** (IG) Toddlers move shakers at fast and slow tempos and in different positions as part of listening to a song.

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



24–36 Months

Option 1
Informal GatheringSkill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language

Toddlers participate in a book sharing focused on bedtime practices of construction trucks with human-like characteristics.



Key Concepts

Construction site
Construction trucks



Materials Needed

Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site by Sherri Duskey Rinker and Tom Lichtenheld



Also Promotes

Cognitive

Be Prepared: The popular book used in this activity offers rich illustrations with details that toddlers will need time and guidance to explore. The book text may be longer than some toddlers wish to process. Prepare for the session by deciding what book text to use in combination with your own words about the pictures.

BEGIN: [*Invite several toddlers to read a book about big trucks and bedtime. Begin by showing the book cover.*]

ASK: • What do we see on the cover of our book?

[*Follow-up prompts, if needed: Point to truck and ask what it is. Point to moon and ask what it is.*]

• There are some funny things about the truck and moon. What do you see that is silly?

[*Follow-up prompts, if needed: “Do trucks have eyes?” “Does a moon usually sit in part of a truck?”*]



EXPLAIN: I think this is going to be a silly book. Trucks do not have eyes like we do. We usually see a moon up in the sky.

The story in our book happens at a construction site. A construction site is a place where something is being built, like a building or road. Our book tells about trucks that work at the construction site. The trucks are called construction trucks.

Construction is a big word! Let's say together the word construction.

[*Lead toddlers in saying construction 1–2 times.*]

Look at the dark sky on the cover of our book. It is bedtime. The construction trucks are getting ready to sleep.

Our book is called *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site*. The trucks are saying goodnight to their construction site. Let's find out how the trucks get ready for bedtime.

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

- Encourage toddlers to say “Shhhh. Goodnight, truck, goodnight,” after you read about and describe a truck's bedtime arrangement.

**Option 1 continued**

- *Point to and describe the type of work done by the truck. Examples: lifting heavy things for a new building, digging holes, carrying dirt.*
- *Invite toddlers to find and point to the moon in various illustrations.*
- *Point out human-like characteristics of the trucks, such as eyes, grins, and other facial expressions. Toddlers may find humor in the truck taking a bedtime bath and sleeping with a blanket, a truck curled up in a soft dirt bed, and a truck sleeping with a teddy bear.*
- *Define words that are important to the text you read or toddlers seem confused about, such as the word “mighty” in the book description of the bulldozer’s mighty blade.*
- *Stretch out and say a little louder some key action words, such as crunch, roar, yawn.]*

RECAP: The trucks in our story worked hard all day. They were tired and ready to go to sleep. The trucks did some things at bedtime that we do. What is silly about this book?

👁️ What to Look For—Option 1

This is a popular book among toddlers. The illustrations are appealing and the story theme of bedtime is one toddlers readily understand. Toddlers are likely to need your help in noticing some details of the illustrations. Pay close attention to the focus of their gazes and comments to determine how much guidance is needed.

The book is offered to younger toddlers (12–24 months) in Block 17, with the suggestion that a caregiver use his/her own words to describe the story and rich illustrations. The current activity assumes more of the book text, including novel words, can be shared with older toddlers.

📈 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Ask toddlers to describe how they do some of the bedtime routines described in the book, such as take a bath or sleep with a favorite toy. ■ Omit attention to several of the trucks if it appears toddlers are losing interest.

Enrichment ■ Draw attention to and define some of the action words associated with what trucks do, such as lifting, churning, carrying, and scooping. Example: “The cement mixer churns the cement in the truck. Churn means to turn around and around. Look at how the cement truck’s mixer is turning around and around in our picture.”

24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Receptive language
Expressive language

Toddlers describe and show how toy construction trucks featured in book illustrations work.



Key Concepts

Construction trucks



Materials Needed

Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site by Sherri Duskey Rinker and Tom Lichtenheld

Toy construction trucks (see Be Prepared)



Also Promotes

Cognitive
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity option is for toddlers who are familiar with the book through participation in Option 1 or a similar book sharing. Secure some toy trucks featured in the book, such as a crane truck, cement mixer, dump truck, bulldozer, excavator.

Invite 3–4 toddlers to join you in working with trucks that are shown in the book *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site*. Open the session by displaying the cover of the book and encouraging toddlers to help you tell what the book is about. Turn to pages associated with toddlers' descriptions, as appropriate.

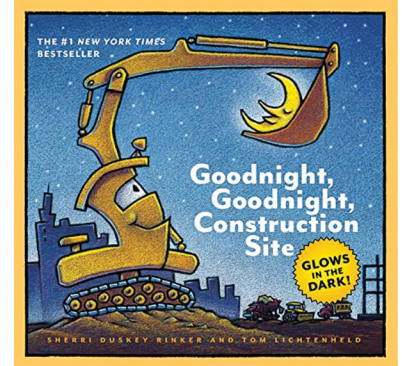
Explain that the construction trucks shown in the book do important things. We can use toy trucks to show and talk about what trucks do. Give each toddler a truck.

Focus on one truck at a time. Turn to the book illustration(s) associated with a truck held by a toddler in the gathering. Say the name of the truck and use a combination of book text and your own words to describe how the truck works or what the truck does, as shown in the illustration(s). Below are examples:

- Crane truck: reaching, stretching, lifting high
- Cement mixer: spinning, churning
- Dump truck: carrying (hauling), dumping things
- Bulldozer: pushing
- Excavator: digging, lifting, scooping

Invite the toddler holding the corresponding truck to show how the truck works. Example: "Maya is holding a dump truck, just like the dump truck in this picture. Maya, would you like to show us how the truck can carry and dump things?" Encourage the toddler to describe what he/she is doing with the truck. Add descriptive information as appropriate. Example: "The part on the back of the truck is called a truck bed. When the truck bed is up, it dumps dirt or whatever the truck is carrying."

Continue giving attention to each truck held by a toddler, beginning first with a description of the book's illustration of the truck. Conclude the activity by explaining that we did two things to learn more about some construction trucks. We looked at pictures of trucks and used a play truck to show how the truck works.




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

This activity connects selected trucks featured in the book with items toddlers can hold and manipulate. The trucks offer a concrete way for toddlers to carry out actions associated with words they are learning.

Your important role in the activity is to facilitate each toddler's contribution to the session. Avoid a scenario where you describe and the toddler demonstrates what you describe. It is beneficial for each toddler to be invited to talk about actions with the truck. Some toddlers will have more to say than others. Some may prefer to watch only.

Pace the attention to each truck so there is enough time for each truck to be discussed. Each toddler in the gathering deserves an opportunity to show and tell.

A potential learning outcome of the activity is the use of a book as a reference. Looking at selected pages and comparing an illustrated truck to a toddler's actions with a similar toy truck demonstrate how we can use books for learning specific things. Books do not need to be read in their entirety to be helpful. This is a concept appropriate for exploration during preschool-age years, but early exposure to this use of books can happen informally as part of the activity.

 **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2**

Extra support ■ Provide support for taking turns by reminding toddlers whose turn it is to show how a truck works.

Enrichment ■ Invite toddlers to move parts of their bodies to show how a truck moves or works. Examples: crane reaches high, cement mixer turns around, dump truck carries loads that are big (hands wide apart) and small (hands close together), bulldozer pushes forward (move hands forward, palms up), excavator digs and lifts.

**Interest Area**

Materials needed: *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site* by Sherri Duskey Rinker and Tom Lichtenheld, toy construction trucks used in Option 2

Place the book and the toy construction trucks in a defined area for toddlers' continued exploration. Toddlers may want to play with a truck(s) managed by another child during the Option 2 activity or interact with the materials in different ways, such as building with blocks or driving the trucks. You may wish to add several other books about trucks or construction.



Family Child Care

Materials needed: *Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site* by Sherri Duskey Rinker and Tom Lichtenheld, toy trucks used in Option 2, materials that can be manipulated during construction work

Preschool-age children may be interested in Options 1 and/or 2. Add safe play materials to the Interest Area activity that can be moved by or in toy trucks.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal Problem-solving

Toddlers explore spatial concepts in a book about two cats.



Key Concepts

Up
Down
On
Off
Inside
Outside
Small
Large



Materials Needed

Cat Up, Cat Down by
Catherine Hnatov



Also Promotes

Communication/Language

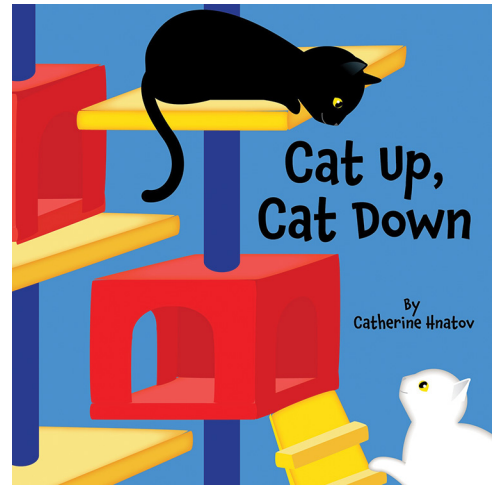
Be Prepared: The engaging book featured in this activity shows seven sets of contrasting spatial concepts (14 total). The Key Concepts list represents four contrasts used as examples in the activity description. When you review the book, consider ways to emphasize concepts that toddlers in your setting may be learning or finding confusing.

BEGIN: [*Invite 3–4 toddlers to share a book with you about two cats. Begin the activity by showing the book cover.*]

Our book is about two cats. The two cats are shown on the cover of our book.

ASK: [*Encourage toddlers to point.*]

- Which cat is up?
- Which cat is down?



EXPLAIN: [*Point to the eyes of each cat as you describe the following:*]

The cats are looking at each other. One cat is looking up. The other cat is looking down.

The cats need to look up or down because they are in different places.

ACT: The words up and down tell us where something or someone is.

[*Demonstrate and lead toddlers in moving their hands up and down, as suggested below.*]

Let's all put our hand up.

Now let's all put our hand down.

[*Lift up your hand.*]

Is my hand up or is my hand down?

EXPLAIN: Our book is called *Cat Up, Cat Down*. Let's find out what other places the cats get into.

ACT: [*Use the following strategies to promote toddlers' awareness of spatial concepts shown in the book:*

- *Read the book text and use your own words to describe where the cats are located in an illustration. Point generously.*

Option 1 continued

- Ask questions that draw attention to space differences. Example: “Look at the small box and the large box. Which cat has more room to move around in its box? Why?”
- Use toddlers’ experiences and props to provide examples of spatial arrangements shown in illustrations. Example for on/off the table: Invite a toddler to put a toy on a table and another toddler to take the toy off the table. Example for inside/outside: Are we inside our building or outside our building? When we play on our playground, are we inside our building or outside our building?
- Repeat and expand on toddlers’ comments or pointing.]

RECAP: The cats in our book are always in different places. One cat is up, the other cat is down. One cat is outside, the other cat is inside. One cat is behind something, the other cat is in front of something. We are learning words that tell us where something or someone is.

 What to Look For—Option 1

The contrasting positions of the cats in each of the book’s illustrations offer appealing problems for toddlers to solve. Practice using the opposites of spatial concepts emphasized in this book will eventually make it easy for toddlers to understand contrasts in locations. If one cat is up, for example, then the other is down. Young children enjoy exploring these concepts in their play, such as *Hide-and-Seek*. The current activity provides words for spatial positions that are familiar to most toddlers.

Children who are learning words for spatial concepts can easily confuse the terms, saying up when they mean down or in when they mean out. Providing explicit practice with the terms in different contexts is one way to help toddlers remember which word represents which spatial position. The activity description suggests simple examples to complement the book’s illustrations, such as asking whether a raised hand is up or down.

Toddlers may want to add some meaning or story to some of the illustrations. The cat behind the plant may be playing *Hide-and-Seek* with the cat in front of the plant, for example. Connecting the cats’ activities to toddlers’ experiences can strengthen understanding of the concepts promoted in the book. Questions can enrich the connections. Example: “What do you hide behind when you play *Hide-and-Seek* with your friends?”

 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Reinforce toddlers’ understanding of spatial concepts plus the colors black and white by asking which cat (black or white) is in a pictured location. Example: “Which cat in our picture is inside the small box? The white cat or the black cat?”

Enrichment ■ In the opening segment, when you describe how the cats are looking up or down, ask toddlers which cat is looking down and which cat is looking up. Follow up with a question about why the cat at the top of the climber needs to look down and why the cat lower on the climber needs to look up.



24–36 Months

Option 2 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Problem-solving

A toddler practices the use of spatial concepts in guided play with blocks and toy vehicles.



Key Concepts

In
Out
Under
Over
Up
Down
Off
On



Materials Needed

Cat Up, Cat Down by Catherine Hnatov (see Extra Support tip)
Several toy cars in the block area

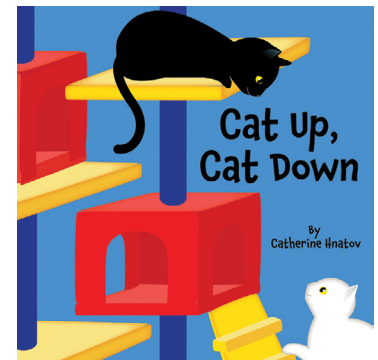


Also Promotes

Physical/Health
Communication/Language

This activity is a follow-up to Option 1. Invite a toddler to join you in the block area to play with 2–3 toy vehicles. Encourage the toddler to select the vehicles. Use the toddler’s interests to build two or more structures that could be used with the vehicles to demonstrate some spatial concepts. Here are examples:

- Garage: in and out
- Bridge: under and over
- Ramp: up and down
- Road or race track: off and on



Help the toddler build the structures or encourage him/her to do so independently. Build and play with one structure first and then add a second. Encourage the toddler to suggest a structure. Example: “Let’s build something our cars can go under. What can we build for the cars to go under?”

You may wish to pursue a parallel-play arrangement. This enables you to use a vehicle(s) in ways that illustrate spatial concepts. Refrain from building a structure; a toddler may wrongly assume he/she should try to build this type of structure, too.

Suggest and describe ways the toy vehicles can use a structure. Describe the toddler’s actions, and your actions, with a vehicle, with emphasis on spatial concepts. Examples: “Your car is parked in the garage.” “I am taking my car out of the garage.”

Conclude the activity by describing what happened, especially the spatial arrangements of the vehicles.

What to Look For—Option 2

Play with blocks and toy vehicles is well matched to the goal of helping a toddler understand spatial concepts. Deciding what to build from the perspective of the vehicles is a good way to plan for uses of the vehicles and to ensure some spatial concepts are described and explored in the activity. A limited number of spatial terms will likely be explored, but they can be done so with repetition and creative variation.

Look for opportunities to put vehicles in opposite positions with the toddler. Examples: If you move a vehicle under a bridge, suggest the toddler move a vehicle over the bridge. If a toddler puts a vehicle on the road, put a vehicle off the road.

Option 2 continued

Welcome another toddler who wishes to join the activity and indicate you are part of play focused on doing things with the toy vehicles. Remember this is guided play. Your role is not to provide a launch to free play, although the activity may eventually transition into free play (see Interest Area suggestion).

It is fine if a toddler wishes to put a vehicle in an unconventional location, such as on top of a wide tower.

 **More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2**

Extra support ■ Keep the book close at hand, for use as a reference to a specific illustration. Example: “Let’s look again at how the cats were in and out.”

Enrichment ■ Children enjoy identifying and correcting adult errors. Intentionally do the opposite of what you say you’ll do. Example: Announce you are going to put your car under the bridge but place the car over the bridge. Ask: “Did I put my car under the bridge?” ■ Invite the toddler to choose other items for play, such as farm animals in a barn, baby dolls under a blanket, or a family figure on a bed in a dollhouse. Be sure to draw attention to the spatial positions.

**Interest Area**

Materials needed: *Cat Up, Cat Down* by Catherine Hnatov; sets of two similar or identical animal figures, such as two frogs or two sheep; toy vehicles and blocks

Provide the book and sets of similar/identical animal figures with the suggestion that toddlers put the animal figures in places like those shown in a picture. Offer a demonstration based on the book cover: One frog is up, one frog is down. One toddler could hold each animal figure (one per hand) or two toddlers could hold one figure each. Toddlers may want to move to an item of furniture, such as a table, or add props to do what is shown in a book illustration. Encourage toddlers to pick illustrations of interest.

Another option is to extend the Option 2 activity into free play. Place the book in the block area along with toy vehicles. Invite toddlers to build structures that can be used for playing with the vehicles.

**Family Child Care**

Materials needed: *Cat Up, Cat Down* by Catherine Hnatov

Preschool-age children are likely to enjoy Options 1 and 2, and can help demonstrate some spatial concepts shown in the book, such as standing close to and then far from an item or person. Also, use spatial concepts in descriptions of your care of infant(s) in your setting. Example: “I am putting a blanket over the baby.” “I am lifting the baby up high with my arms.”



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal Self-control

Toddlers watch a caregiver calm down by pretending to be a cornstalk moving in the wind.



Key Concepts

Cornstalk
Calm
Focus



Materials Needed

*2 pictures as shown



Also Promotes

Physical/Health

*Printables provided

Be Prepared: Arrange for an adult or a preschool-age child in your center to demonstrate the cornstalk movements if you do not wish to do so.

BEGIN: *[Invite 3–4 toddlers to help you pretend to be a cornstalk.]*

We are learning some ways to calm our bodies and our minds. Today I will show a way to calm down by pretending to be a cornstalk.

ASK: *[Display picture of corn on the cob and a small bowl of corn.]*

Have you ever eaten something that looks like this?

Did it taste good?

EXPLAIN: *[Point to the corn on the cob and to the bowl of corn when you mention each.]*

This is corn. Our picture shows corn on the cob. Our picture also shows a bowl of corn that has been taken off the cob.

[Display picture of cornstalks. Point to an ear of corn on a cornstalk when you describe it.]

Corn grows on a cornstalk.

Here is a picture of cornstalks. If we look carefully, we can see the cobs of corn on the cornstalks. The corn is inside the leaves of the cob.

A cornstalk grows in a farm field or in a garden. The bottom of the cornstalk is in the ground. The roots of the cornstalk grow deep into the ground. The roots keep the cornstalk in one place when the wind blows. My feet are the roots of the cornstalk.

I am going to stand tall and pretend I am a cornstalk. I am going to pretend that some wind blows in the field where I am standing. The wind will not move my pretend cornstalk because my roots are deep in the ground. The roots help me stay in one place when the wind blows.



**Option 1 continued**

ACT: Please watch me pretend to be a cornstalk moving in wind. The wind is strong. The wind is blowing hard. Please pay attention to whether my feet move while the rest of my pretend cornstalk is moving in the wind.

[Sway your upper body back and forth while making bigger movements with your arms.]

After a brief period of swaying and arm movements, announce the following while continuing to move your body:]

The strong wind is getting gentle. The wind is becoming soft and slow.

[Sway your upper body at a slower pace and make smaller movements with your arms.]

After a brief period, stop the movements and stand with your body in a relaxed position.]

EXPLAIN: My body feels calmer now. I focused on keeping my feet in the same place and moving my body. I did not think about other things. I thought about pretending to be a cornstalk in the wind.

- ASK:**
- Did I move my body slower when our pretend wind became soft and slow?
 - Did my feet move or lift up from the floor?
 - Do you want me to pretend to be a cornstalk again?

[If two or more toddlers respond positively, repeat the movements, beginning with larger upper body and arm movements and then moving at a slower pace with smaller arm movements.]

RECAP: Pretending to be a cornstalk in the wind can help us calm our minds and bodies. I calmed down by focusing on my body. I thought about keeping my feet on the floor while moving my body in wind that was first strong, and then gentle.



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Self-control

Toddlers participate in guided practice of a calming-down activity by pretending to be a cornstalk moving in first strong, and then gentle wind.



Key Concepts

Cornstalk
Calm
Focus



Materials Needed

*2 pictures as shown



Also Promotes

Physical/Health

*Printables provided

Be Prepared: This activity is for toddlers who are familiar with the calming-down activity demonstrated in Option 1. Make arrangements for an adult or preschool-age child in your center to demonstrate the activity if you do not wish to do so.

Invite several toddlers to practice calming down by pretending to be a cornstalk moving in the wind. Use Option 1 strategies to provide a brief description of a cornstalk and, if appropriate, the picture of corn. Then remind toddlers of how we focus on our body while pretending to be a cornstalk moving in the wind. First the wind is strong. Then the wind is slow.



Lead toddlers in pretending their body is a cornstalk moving in strong wind. Encourage toddlers to sway their bodies back and forth and make big movements with their arms. Remind toddlers that we do not move our feet; our feet are the pretend roots of the cornstalk. Encourage toddlers to focus on what their body is doing and not on other things.



Stop moving your body and invite toddlers to also stop moving. Ask toddlers what happens next. Affirm that the wind gets calmer and our bodies move slower. Then lead toddlers in swaying their bodies back and forth at a slower pace and making smaller movements with their arms. The wind is slow and soft. Our pretend cornstalk is moving slower.

After a brief practice of moving our bodies slower, stop moving your body and ask toddlers to stop moving. Talk about your actions. Describe how focusing on our body as a pretend cornstalk in wind can help our bodies and minds get calmer.

Then lead toddlers in another round of practice, this time without a pause between strong and calmer wind movements. Remind toddlers that first there is strong wind, then there is slow wind. Conclude the activity by inviting toddlers to talk about what it's like to pretend to be a cornstalk moving in the wind.



24–36 Months

Option 3 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Self-control

Toddlers practice a calming-down activity by pretending to be a cornstalk moving in strong and then gentle wind, with minimal caregiver guidance.



Key Concepts

Cornstalk
Calm
Focus



Materials Needed

none



Also Promotes

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for toddlers who are familiar with the calming-down activity focused on a pretend cornstalk through participation in Options 1 and 2.

Invite toddlers to practice calming their bodies and minds by pretending to be a cornstalk that moves in strong wind, and then in gentle wind. Remind toddlers to keep feet on the floor and to focus on pretend wind and moving their bodies. Offer verbal support. Provide a demonstration, if needed. It is not necessary for toddlers to move from strong to slower wind at the same time. Offer two rounds, with a pause between each practice (that includes both strong and slow winds) to briefly talk about the experience, including how we focus on the pretend wind and moving our bodies in different winds.

What to Look For—Options 1–3

This is a popular activity among toddlers. Some may find it challenging to keep their feet in place and to transition from faster to slower body movements. The questions of toddlers about these matters in Option 1 are intended to draw attention to these aspects of the activity. In Options 2 and 3, offer verbal support as needed, in an especially quiet, calm voice. Positively accept differences in how toddlers approach the activity.

Option 1 devotes some time to describing a cornstalk in ways that hopefully connect with toddlers' experiences. It is easier for toddlers to pretend they are a cornstalk when they have some knowledge of a cornstalk.

It is not necessary in Option 3 for toddlers to engage in a uniform transition from strong to calmer winds, as noted in the activity description. Pursuing independent practice as a group activity may prompt toddlers to pay more attention to what their peers are doing than to their own image of wind and how their body moves in stronger and then calmer wind.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ In Option 2, repeat the faster and/or slower movement segments if it seems toddlers need more practice with this type of movement.

Enrichment ■ In the Option 1 description of corn, toddlers may have heard the leaves called husks. They may know a cob of corn as an ear of corn.



Interest Area

Materials needed: live nontoxic potted plant, *Big Red Barn* by Margaret Wise Brown, *pictures from Option 1, several books with pictures of plants and roots

Display the potted nontoxic plant and assortment of books on a low table. Show toddlers the cornstalk illustrations in the *Big Red Barn* book plus the Option 1 pictures. Engage toddlers in discussion of the live plant growing in soil. Talk about how the roots keep the plant in the soil and how the part of the plant that grows above the soil can blow and sway in the wind. Draw attention to any trees or shrubs in your setting that may be moving in the wind.

*Printables provided



Family Child Care

Materials needed: see activity description

Preschool-age and older children may enjoy demonstrating the cornstalk in Options 1 and 2. Encourage them to talk about focusing their mind on the pretend wind and cornstalk, and whether their minds and bodies feel calmer after the activity. Infants will enjoy watching any of the option activities.

This activity is an adaptation of a seaweed activity described in the following source: Golden, P., & Saltzman, A. (2008). Mindfulness-based stress reduction for school-age children. In Greco, L. A. & Hayes, S. C. (Eds.), *Acceptance and mindfulness treatment for children & adolescents* (pp. 139–161). Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Awareness of emotions

Toddlers participate in a book sharing on names of different feelings and ways to manage some feelings.



Key Concepts

Feelings



Materials Needed

When I Am/Cuando estoy by Gladys Rosa-Mendoza



Also Promotes

Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Invite 3–4 toddlers to read a book with you about different ways we can feel.*]

We are learning about different kinds of feelings.

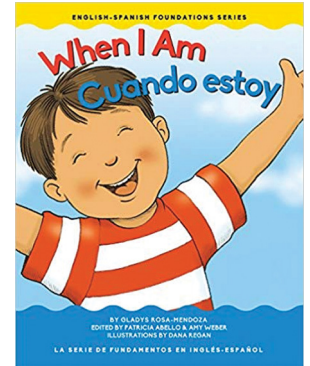
Sometimes we feel happy, sometimes we feel sad, and sometimes we feel lonely.

ASK: [*Show book cover.*]

- Do you think the boy is feeling happy or sad?
- What tells us he is feeling happy? (big smile)

ACT: Let's look at some pictures of children who are having different kinds of feelings.

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



In addition to reading the book text, use your own words to describe an illustration. Point to images you describe.

- *Mention the feeling word at least twice for each picture. Provide a brief definition of a feeling word that toddlers may not know. Examples: "Frightened means we feel scared or afraid of something." "Bored means we are tired of doing something or we do not have anything we want to do."*
- *Ask why a child might be feeling a particular way when the book illustration offers good clues. Examples: the dog in the picture of a child who feels frightened, the balloon that pops in the picture of a child who feels surprised.*
- *Emphasize what a pictured child does when he/she feels a specific way, such as hugging a teddy bear when feeling sad, taking a nap when feeling tired, and looking for something to do when feeling bored.]*

RECAP: We can have different kinds of feelings. Do feelings have names? (yes!) We talked about the names of feelings. Our book showed us what some children do about their feelings. We saw a picture of a girl hugging a teddy bear when she felt sad and a picture of a boy looking for something to do when he felt bored. What did some of the other children in our book do about their feelings?

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

Most toddlers will be familiar with the common feelings featured in this short book but may be uncertain about some feeling names. Being able to put a name or label on how we are feeling is a valuable step in emotion awareness and appropriate responses to feelings. This is a reason for the activity plan's suggestion that the name of an emotion be mentioned at least twice in discussion of the illustration related to the feeling. Pay attention to signs of toddler familiarity with emotion words and offer definitions as appropriate. Toddlers benefit from hearing similar emotion words, such as frightened/scared/afraid.

Look for opportunities to talk with toddlers about what we might do when we have a specific feeling. Six of the nine feelings highlighted in the book offer pictures of a child's response: sad, tired, bored, worried, frightened, and lonely. The pictured child's response to a feeling can launch a broader discussion of other ways to manage a particular feeling.

Illustrations that depict feeling happy and feeling surprised offer opportunities to continue the Block 16 focus on facial expressions. The picture of a boy stomping his feet may be used to discuss how we know someone is angry, but stomping feet is not a useful way to respond to feeling mad about something.

📈 More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Invite toddlers to say each feeling name with you. Point to the word in the book text when you and toddlers say the word together.

Enrichment ■ Ask why it is a good thing to take a nap when we feel tired.

24–36 Months

Option 2 One-to-One



Skill and Goal

Awareness of emotions

A toddler uses dolls that represent different emotions to talk about happy, angry, frightened, and sad.



Key Concepts

Feelings
Happy
Angry
Frightened
Sad



Materials Needed

When I Am/Cuando estoy by Gladys Rosa-Mendoza
Emotion dolls (see Be Prepared)
Cloth sack or covered basket



Also Promotes

Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for a toddler who is familiar with the *When I Am* book through participation in Option 1 or a similar book sharing. One possibility for the emotion dolls is Excellerations® Emotions Plush Dolls (set of four). Begin the session with the dolls in a cloth sack or out of sight, so they are not a distraction in the first segment of the activity.

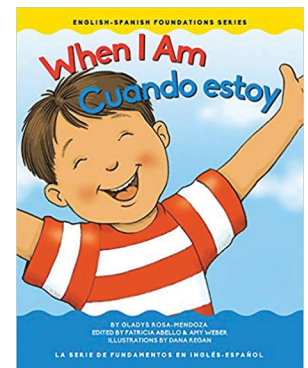
Invite a toddler to look at the *When I Am* book about feelings with you. Review the pictures briefly, emphasizing the emotion word associated with the picture. Give more attention to pictures/feelings that seem to be of particular interest to the toddler and to the following four illustrations: happy, angry, frightened, and sad.

Then display the dolls. Explain that each doll shows a different way we can feel. Invite the toddler to look at each doll with you. Encourage the toddler to hold a doll as you talk about it.

Begin with the doll that shows happy. Use the following approach with each doll:

- Say the name of the feeling the doll is showing. Point to the word on the doll as you say it. Point to and describe the doll's facial expressions that represent the feeling.
- Find and talk about the picture in the book that corresponds to the feeling shown by the doll. Remind the toddler what the picture shows. Two of the dolls offer words that differ from the book's feeling word. Explain that scared (the word on the doll) is another way to say we are frightened (the book's term) and mad (the word on the doll) is another way to say we are angry (the book's term).
- Ask the toddler whether he/she knows someone who sometimes feels the way the doll is feeling (happy, mad, scared, sad). Example: "Do you know someone who feels happy doing something special? What does the person do that makes him/her feel happy?"
- Invite the toddler to pick another doll to talk about.

Conclude the activity by reminding the toddler of the four feelings we talked about. Invite the toddler to point to the doll that shows a feeling you name or to say the name of the feeling shown by each doll.





Option 2 continued

What to Look For—Option 2

The dolls offer a familiar material for talking about four common feelings and an opportunity to strengthen a toddler’s awareness that some feelings have several names (scared/frightened, mad/angry). Asking a toddler to connect the discussion of a feeling to someone he/she knows is a challenging invitation that some toddlers may prefer to ignore. Respect the toddler’s wishes. You may wish to describe a child you know in relation to a feeling. Examples: “I know a girl who is very happy when she plays with blocks.” “I know a boy who was very sad when his friend moved away.”

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Ask the toddler to tell what is shown in a book picture, especially in the second segment of the activity where four illustrations are highlighted. ■ Use fewer than four of the dolls if you anticipate four will be too challenging. Remember that happy and sad are among the first emotions young children learn.

Enrichment ■ Encourage the toddler to compare the facial expressions of two or more of the dolls. How are they different and the same?



Interest Area

Materials needed: *When I Am/Cuando estoy* by Gladys Rosa-Mendoza, dolls used in Option 2

Provide the Option 2 materials and invite toddlers to find the book picture that goes with the feeling shown by each doll. Encourage toddlers to say the name of the feeling and to describe what is happening in the book picture and features of the doll’s facial expression.



Family Child Care

Materials needed: *When I Am/Cuando estoy* by Gladys Rosa-Mendoza, dolls used in Option 2

Preschool-age children may enjoy participating with toddlers in Option 2. School-age children may enjoy reading the book in Option 1.



24–36 Months

Option 1 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal Fine motor development

Toddlers move shakers in different positions as part of listening to a song.



Key Concepts

Listen
Stop



Materials Needed

Shakers—1 per toddler and caregiver



Also Promotes

Self-Regulation

BEGIN: *[Move a shaker as you invite toddlers to join you. Sit on the floor with toddlers.]*

EXPLAIN: Here are shakers.

[Give each toddler one shaker. Distribute each shaker so the handle is out for a toddler to grasp.]

Hold the round part of your shaker with both hands prominently in front of you.]

ASK: Look at how I am holding my shaker. Is this the best way to hold a shaker?

[Encourage toddlers to tell and show you how to hold a shaker.]

Let's practice shaking our shakers!

[Encourage toddlers to shake their shakers for a brief period of exploration.]

EXPLAIN: I am going to sing a song that will help us move our shakers. It will be fun to move our shakers to music.

We need to listen carefully to the words in the song. We will move our shakers when the words say "shake, shake, shake." We will stop our shakers when we hear the word "stop."

Let's put our shakers in our lap (or in both of our hands) when it is time to stop

[Demonstrate putting your shaker in your lap or in both of your hands. Explain this is what we do when the song says "stop."]

Remember, we use our ears to listen carefully.

ACT: *[Sing the adjacent "Shake Our Shakers" song, moving your shaker with the words and music. Encourage toddlers to move their shakers. Put your shaker in your lap (or in both hands) when it is time to stop.]*

Shake Our Shakers

[Sing with a quick tempo to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb"]

We start our shakers, shake, shake, shake,

Shake, shake, shake,

Shake, shake, shake.

We make our shakers hop, hop, hop

And then it's time to stop.

Option 1 continued

[Enthusiastically acknowledge toddlers' efforts. Emphasize that we moved our shakers when the song said to "shake, shake, shake." We worked hard to stop shaking our shakers when our song said "it's time to stop."]

EXPLAIN: Part of our song says "hop, hop, hop." Let's think about how we make our shaker go "hop, hop, hop."

One idea is to put our shakers up and down like this. And then move our shaker up and down.

[Hold your shaker straight up. Then move the shaker up and down as you say "hop, hop, hop."]

Let's try it together. We can make our shakers go "hop, hop, hop!"

[Lead toddlers in the "hop, hop, hop" action described above. Offer positive comments about their efforts.]

Let's do our shaker song one more time! I will sing all of the song again. We move our shakers when I start singing. Listen carefully for the "hop, hop, hop" part of our song.

ACT: *[Sing the song and lead toddlers in moving their shakers. Point to your ear just before the "hop, hop, hop" part of the song. Emphasize the "hop, hop, hop" position of your shaker. Put your shaker in your lap at the end of the song.]*

RECAP: We are learning how to move our shakers to a song. We listened carefully to the words of our song. We tried to move our shakers in a different way when the song said "hop, hop, hop." Does our shaker make a sound when we stop moving it?

**👁️ What to Look For—Option 1**

The activity extends a Block 7 opportunity to move an object as part of listening to a song. The current activity's use of a shaker differs in several ways from the Block 7 use of a bell. In addition to offering a different sound and feel, the shaker is held in a distinct upright position for "hop, hop, hop."

Coordinating the shaker with the song may be challenging for some toddlers. Consider offering more practice over time. Some toddlers may participate best if they can move their bodies as part of shaking their shaker. You may wish to adapt the activity to accommodate toddlers' need for gross motor movement. Encourage toddlers to stop moving their body when the song says "stop."

**Option 1 continued**A small icon consisting of three black squares of increasing size, arranged in a staircase pattern.**More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1**

Extra support ■ Repeat the song (with toddlers moving their shakers) before introducing a different action for “hop, hop, hop.”

Enrichment ■ Ask: “Why does a shaker not make a sound when we stop shaking it?” ■ Invite toddlers to compare the sound of one shaker to the sound of all shakers. ■ The activity may be continued with individual toddlers, if interested. A toddler may wish to hold one shaker in each hand. Sing the song and then describe a toddler’s actions. Example: “Mateo made his shaker go shake, shake, shake. Then he stopped when the song said ‘stop.’”



24–36 Months

Option 2 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Fine motor development

Toddlers practice moving and stop moving a shaker as part of listening to a recorded song.



Key Concepts

Stop
Start



Materials Needed

CD player
Greg and Steve *We All Live Together* Vol 1
Shakers—1 per toddler and caregiver



Also Promotes

Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: Place the CD player or digital device close to you so you do not need to stand to start and stop the music in this activity.



Invite 3–4 toddlers to join you in shaking our shakers. Sit facing toddlers. Give each toddler one shaker. Encourage toddlers to hold the shakers with both hands so it is not moving. Explain: “Our hands are not moving. The shakers are not moving. We do not hear shaker sounds.”

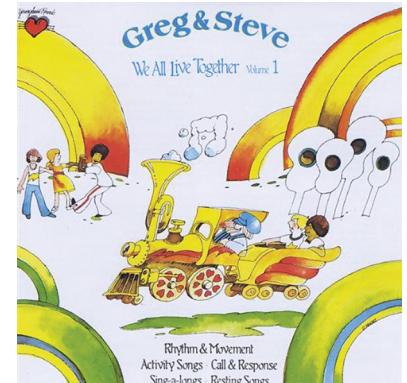
Lead toddlers in several brief practice rounds of start and stop action with their shakers. Then sing the “Shake Our Shakers” song from Option 1 and encourage toddlers to move their shakers to your singing, remembering the position of their shaker for “hop, hop, hop.”

Show the CD cover and explain that we can start moving our hands to make shaker sounds when we hear the music. Our hands will stop moving when the music stops. It will be quiet.

Play the song “We All Live Together.” Lead toddlers in shaking their shakers. Stop the music after about 30 seconds. Explain: “We moved our hands and made shaker sounds when the music was playing. The music stopped and we stopped moving our hands!

We are learning to start and stop moving our hands. Let’s try it again.”

Provide another round of practice, starting and stopping the music several times.



👁️ What to Look For—Option 2

The activity has the challenge of hearing recorded music and following requests to stop when the music stops. Music is highly engaging for most children, and the task of starting and stopping a fine motor action can be more difficult with music than with simple verbal prompts. Some toddlers may respond in their own way to recorded music and forget the plan to stop shaking a shaker when the music stops. Offer a friendly reminder and remember it takes time to develop skill in acting in response to music.

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

Extra support ■ Toddlers may prefer to hear the entire song and then practice starting and stopping shaker actions in a second playing of the music. ■ Toddlers may wish to stand and move their bodies as they shake the shakers. Encourage them to stop body movements when they hear the music stop.

Enrichment ■ Encourage interested toddlers to take turns giving you a hand signal or verbal request to stop and start the music. This shifts responsibility for start/stop decisions from you to a toddler.



24–36 Months

Option 3 Informal Gathering



Skill and Goal

Fine motor development

Toddlers move shakers at fast and slow tempos and in different positions as part of listening to a song.



Key Concepts

Slow
Fast
Listen



Materials Needed

Shakers—1 per toddler and caregiver



Also Promotes

Self-Regulation



Invite 3–4 toddlers to join you for some fun in shaking our shakers. Engage toddlers in shaking our shakers slowly and then quickly. Then remind toddlers how we can hold our shakers upright. Offer a demonstration that includes shaking. Remind toddlers we hold our shakers upright when we hear the words “hop, hop, hop” in our song.

Explain that you will sing our song for shaking shakers. First you will sing the song slowly. We will shake our shakers slowly. Remind toddlers that we hold our shakers straight up when we hear the words “hop, hop, hop” in our song. Then explain you will sing the song faster. We will move our shakers faster. Remind toddlers we need to listen carefully to our song’s words and whether the song is fast or slow.

Sing the Option 1 song at a slow tempo. Encourage toddlers to move their shakers as you sing the song. Invite toddlers to sing with you. Give a signal, such as pointing to your ear, just before the “hop, hop, hop” words. Prominently hold your shaker in an upright position during “hop, hop, hop.” Remind toddlers to stop their shakers when you say stop at the end of the verse.

Repeat the song at a faster tempo, again encouraging toddlers to move their shakers as you sing the song and hold shakers upright at the designated point. Conclude the activity by describing how we used our hands to move our shakers in different ways: fast, slow, upright.

👁️ What to Look For—Option 3

This activity combines the shaker position (upright) task of Option 1 with attention to fast and slow tempos. The tempo remains the same once you begin singing the song, providing motor planning time for the upright position of the shaker during “hop, hop, hop.” Positively accept variations in how toddlers manage the activity, and remember that toddlers cannot be expected to move their shakers in unison or necessarily follow the rhythm.

The slow and fast hand movements in this activity connect with the slow and fast gross motor movements in the current block’s Self-Regulation activity in which toddlers are invited to pretend they are a cornstalk moving in strong and calmer wind. See Extra Support tip.

Option 3 continued More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Demonstrate the contrast of slow and fast tempos when you describe the plan for singing the song twice, once slowly and once faster. ■ Explain that slowly means slow. ■ Toddlers may prefer to stand for the activity. ■ Explain that we are moving our hands fast and slow. We move our bodies fast and slow when we pretend to be a cornstalk moving in the wind. (Self-Regulation activity in this block.)

Enrichment ■ Invite toddlers to suggest another song for the activity and the part of the song we put the shakers in an upright position.



Interest Area

Materials needed: basket of shakers

Provide a basket of shakers so toddlers may continue exploring how to manipulate shakers. Encourage toddlers to say “start” and “stop” as they begin shaking their shakers and stop shaking their shakers. Point out consequences of toddlers’ actions with the shakers. Example: “Liam, your shaker stopped making noise when it stopped moving!”



Family Child Care

In addition to offering Options 1–3 with toddlers, as appropriate, encourage older children to shake their shakers in different patterns, such as the following:

Shake—Shake—Stop
Shake—Stop—Shake—Stop

Begin the activity with longer pauses between each action as children practice starting and stopping. Offer shorter pauses as children become accustomed to the pattern. Toddlers who participate in this variation for older children may wish to continue shaking their shakers rather than following the pattern.