BLOCK 1 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at high-contrast pictures of familiar objects.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about high-contrast pictures of familiar objects.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn pages of a book, and communicate about high-contrast pictures of familiar objects.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) A young infant looks at a mobile and other objects during a caregiver-guided tour of the room.

Option 2 (OO) An infant looks at and manipulates similar soft toys.

Option 3 (OO) An infant looks at and manipulates different types of toys.

Self-Regulation

Paying Attention

Option 1 (OO) An infant watches and touches a moving object with caregiver guidance.

Option 2 (OO) An infant watches a moving object and manipulates the object with caregiver guidance.

Option 3 (OO) An infant watches a moving object and independently manipulates the object with caregiver encouragement.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a responsive interaction with a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a responsive interaction with a caregiver, focused on a cause-and-effect toy.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants participate in responsive interactions with a caregiver during a song.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) A nonmobile infant practices body balance and control as part of guided tummy time with a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An infant practices crawling or creeping to an appealing destination created by a caregiver.

Option 3 (IG) Mobile infants participate in a brief song that encourages up and down arm movements.

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

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BLOCK 1

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language

A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at high-contrast pictures of familiar objects.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Black on White by Tana Hoban

Also Promotes
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Sit with a young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*]

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

I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the fish? (Point.)

[*Point to the fish. Pause and watch for the infant's response. The young infant may show interest in the book by vocalizing, turning toward you, gazing at the picture, or reaching out and batting at the book.*

Acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at fish. I can hear you cooing!"]

EXPLAIN: Our book has pictures of different things. Let's open the book and see what's on the next page!

ACT: [*Open the book to the first page. Point to and talk with the infant about the picture. Although there is no text, infants will benefit from hearing you talk about the pictures as you share the book. Example: "Do you see the spoon? (point) We use a spoon to eat cereal. You like eating cereal!"*

Continue to talk with the infant about pictures in the book using strategies, such as the following:

- *Point to and describe pictures. Example: "This is a butterfly. Here are the butterfly's wings. Do you see the beautiful butterfly wings?"*
- *Pause and talk about pictures that the infant seems particularly interested in. Example: "You are looking at the leaf. I am going to move my finger around the edge of the leaf. I think you like this picture."*

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

- *Describe and respond to the infant's gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are kicking your legs at the picture of the keys. I am going to point to each key. Here is a key. Here is a key. Here is a key. And here is another key. There are a lot of keys in this picture! I will hold the book close so you can look at the keys a bit longer."*
- *Use a soft, soothing voice.*

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows a sign of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We looked at a book with pictures of different things. You liked looking at the pictures. You made cooing noises when you looked at the picture of the spoon. You kicked your legs and looked at the keys for a long time! This was a fun book to read together."*]

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BLOCK 1

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about high-contrast pictures of familiar objects.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Black on White by Tana Hoban

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "Look, do you see the fish? Our book has pictures of different things. I wonder what we are going to see. Let's open the book and find out!"

Encourage the infant to turn book pages with you. Share the book with strategies, such as the following:

- Point to and name objects pictured. Encourage the infant to look at the objects with you. Example: (Point to each object as you say its name.) "This is an elephant. Here is the elephant's trunk. Here is the tail. These are the elephant's feet."
- Describe what the infant is looking at. Example: "These are cookies. You are looking closely at the two cookies. They are round with bumpy edges. Look at the tiny holes inside the cookies!"
- Pause and talk about the pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. You may wish to provide additional context or information. Example: "You are looking at the glasses. I wear glasses on my eyes to help me see. Your mommy wears glasses too! We wear glasses on our eyes."
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are touching the picture of the fork and spoon. You are smiling! You use a spoon to eat your cereal in the morning! I think you like this picture."
- Help the infant connect book information to their own experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "This is a bib. You wear a bib when it is time to eat. Look at the next picture. What do you see? I see a spoon! First you put on a bib. Then you use a spoon to eat your cereal! What else do you see?"
- Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment.
- Follow the infant's cues about the pace of looking at book pages.
  - Turn the pages as slowly or as quickly as the infant seems to prefer.
  - Watch the infant's cues to know when to stop looking at the book.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun looking at the pictures in this book together, Sam. You touched the picture of the glasses. You smiled at the cookies! You helped turn the pages. I think you liked this book!"

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BLOCK 1

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn pages of a book, and communicate about high-contrast pictures of familiar objects.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Black on White by Tana Hoban

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or prefer to stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to help you hold the book and turn the pages. You may wish to keep all of the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look, do you see the fish? Our book has pictures of different things. Would you like to help me turn the page to look at the pictures?" The infant may help you turn the page or turn the pages independently. Use strategies, such as the following, to share the book with the infant:

- Point to and label objects in the pictures. Example: (Point to each object as you name.) "This is a clown doll. Look at the little ball on the clown's hat! Here are the arms of the clown. Let's touch the clown's legs! What else do we see?"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you label. Example: "I see a picture of a spoon. Do you see the spoon? You can point to the spoon!"
- Describe what the infant is looking at and provide additional information. Example: "You are looking at a picture of the keys. The keys are on a chain. I am going to point to each key. Here is a key. Here is a key. Here is a key. And here is another key! Wow, there are a lot of keys in this picture!"
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'baby.' You are looking at the picture of the clown doll. The doll looks like a baby!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and understandings. Example: "This is a leaf. Leaves grow on trees and plants. There are leaves on the tree on our playground."
- Invite the infant to say (repeat) names of items you describe, such as the spoon, cookie, or "baby" (clown doll).
- Follow the infant's cues regarding how quickly or slowly to turn the pages.
- Conclude the activity by recognizing the infant's participation. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Franco. You opened and closed your mouth when you looked at the spoon! You pointed to the bucket. You turned the pages to see what was next! We had fun reading our book together."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of these options encourages responsive and enjoyable book sharing experiences with infants. Positive interactions during a book sharing can foster a love of books and stories. This book provides simple illustrations of familiar objects in black against a white background. Although the pictures may seem uninteresting to adults, young infants will be drawn to the contrast between the black and the white on each page. This contrast supports vision development in young infants, and older infants will enjoy looking at the clearly defined shapes of familiar objects. Look for instances of the infant gazing, pointing, touching, or using his/her hands to bat at or tap the pictures. Infants may also express interest in the book by vocalizing, including cooing, babbling, and later saying a word or making a corresponding sound (such as lip smacking when looking at the cookies). Older infants may point to and label some of the familiar objects.

An infant may signal disinterest in the book sharing by looking away, fussing, or turning his/her body away from the book. Respond to the infant's disinterest in the activity. Example: "I can see you are squirming away from the book. I don't think you want to read our book right now, Simran. I can hold you or we can find another activity."

In Options 2 and 3, some infants may be eager to turn the pages and spend limited or no time looking at the illustrations. One way to deal with this interest is to support one or two rounds of mostly turning pages (carefully), and then engage the infant in turning the pages more slowly so pictures can be looked at and talked about. It may be helpful to acknowledge the infant's page-turning interest and the purpose of sharing a book. Example: "It is fun to turn pages of a book. We also want to have fun looking at the pictures in our book. We turn the pages so we can see the pictures."

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Help a young infant focus on your voice by softly singing a description of the pictures on each page. ■ Provide an object for an infant to mouth or chew instead of the book. ■ Rather than looking at the pictures in order, support the infant in exploring pages as he/she chooses.

Enrichment ■ Invite the infant to "find" a picture as you turn the page. Example: When the butterfly and leaf are shown, encourage the infant to find one of these items (assuming the infant is familiar with one or both). ■ Provide an item similar to one shown in the book for an infant to hold and explore during or after the book sharing. Example: the infant may enjoy holding and exploring a toy elephant as he/she looks at the picture of the elephant in the book.

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BLOCK 1

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several board books with high-contrast colors

Place the books in frequently-visited locations for infants to look at and manipulate. Infants may enjoy looking at the pictures during tummy time, while waiting to eat, or during floor time. Talk about what infants are looking at.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: large piece of white paper affixed to a low table, crayons and markers in black and focal colors (red, yellow, blue, green), palm grip crayons, several board books with high-contrast colors

Invite older children to create a group art project, such as a simple mural using contrasting colors. Older children may create recognizable objects or people. Toddlers will enjoy making marks on the paper with the bold colors. Older infants may try making a mark on the paper with a palm grip crayon. Place the work on a low wall for infants as well as older children to enjoy.

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BLOCK 1

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

A young infant looks at a mobile and other objects during a caregiver-guided tour of the room.

Key Concepts
Look
Mobile

Materials Needed
Mobile or hanging shapes

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
My Very First Book of Shapes by Eric Carle

Be Prepared: This activity is an opportunity for you to take one infant at a time on a brief tour of items in your room, with special focus on a mobile. An existing mobile may be used. Alternatively, use ribbon to hang a few familiar toys from a 12" length of dowel. Hang the toys where the infant can see them when held by a caregiver.

Hold an infant who is not yet reaching toward objects in a secure manner that provides a strong opportunity to fix his/her gaze on objects in the room, including the mobile.

BEGIN: [*Pick up an infant who is alert and seems ready to engage in interaction. Say "hello" in a gentle voice.*]

Let's look at some things in our room.

ACT: [*Carry the infant slowly and intentionally around your room. Stop frequently and encourage the infant to look at objects. Point to and name the object, especially objects that attract the infant's attention.*

Describe each object that interests the infant. Examples: "This is a paper butterfly. It has bright colors." "I see you are looking at the edge of the door. We can see a light color next to a dark color."

Carry the infant to the mobile.]

EXPLAIN: Here is a mobile. Our mobile has pretty colors.

[*Describe the mobile and infant's response. Example: "I see some animal shapes. I think you are looking at the red dog."*

Encourage the infant to look at the mobile's movements. If necessary, blow on or touch the mobile lightly to initiate movement.]

ASK: Would you like to touch the mobile?

ACT: We will move closer so you can reach the mobile.

[*Move the infant close enough to swipe at the mobile, if he/she wishes.*

Describe shapes and colors on the mobile. Stay close to the mobile for about 30 seconds.

Describe the infant's responses. Examples: "You are looking at the mobile. Your legs and arms are moving and your eyes are wide. I think you like to look at the mobile." "You moved your hand and arm and made the mobile move."]

RECAP: We walked around our room together. We stopped to talk about interesting things in our room.

[*Name the items that caught the infant's attention.*]

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

You had fun looking at a mobile.

[*Describe the infant's reactions to the mobile.*]

What to Look For—Option 1

Reflect on the way people behave at a museum or an antique car show. Some individuals move slowly, looking carefully at each item, whereas others move more quickly. Be attentive to differences in the pace each infant prefers for touring the room. Some infants may like a leisurely tour with time to focus on one or two single objects. Other infants may enjoy the motion of being carried and may want to move and see things at a faster pace. Your responsive actions, including language, are key to supporting the infant's learning in this activity.

An infant may initially look at an object and then look away. You may notice an infant lean toward colorful shapes. When the infant is interested in the colorful shapes, you may notice his/her legs and arms moving. Some infants open their mouth when in contact with an interesting object. These movements are indicators the infant finds an object attractive.

Physical skills develop rapidly during infancy. Some infants may have the ability to swipe at the mobile or grasp the mobile toys. You may see younger infants enjoy looking at the mobile, or reaching their hands toward the mobile.

Infants have individual ways of letting you know "I've had enough." Be aware of how much novelty each infant can manage without feeling overwhelmed. Looking away, frowning, or fussing may be signals to change activities.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ A little break from new stimulation may help the infant regulate his/her emotions after a new experience. If an infant shows signs of needing a brief break from the activity, walk or sway while holding the infant. ■ Move closer to an object that seems to be of particular interest to the infant. ■ If an infant holds his/her gaze on one object, remain there until it appears the infant is ready to look at another object. ■ Infants enjoy looking at the contrast of dark and light. An infant may notice a stream of light on the wall. Adjust your focus to see what the infant sees.

Enrichment ■ Infants benefit from looking at objects from more than one point of view. Change positions to allow the infant to see an interesting object from more than one perspective. Describe how the object looks in each position. ■ Provide an opportunity for the infant to touch things by moving closer to items of interest to the infant. ■ Describe the infant's fine motor actions and/or effects of the infant's actions. Examples: "You reached out with your arm and touched the mobile with your hand. Would you like to reach and touch again?" "The stars moved when you touched a ribbon with your hand."

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BLOCK 1

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant looks at and manipulates similar soft toys.

Key Concepts
See
Out
Soft
Hear

Materials Needed
Melissa & Doug Fishbowl Fill and Spill

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

This activity is designed for an infant who can readily grasp an item. Display the container of soft toys and invite the infant to look at some toy animals that live in a sea. Sit facing the infant if he/she can sit without support. Sit on the floor and provide support with your legs if the infant is not yet sitting independently.

Place the container of soft toys in front of the infant. Encourage the infant to look at what is inside the container. Some infants may reach for the soft toys, and other infants may express surprise and delight looking into the container.

Take signals from the infant about how to proceed with the activity. If the infant begins to remove the sea creatures, encourage him/her to get another one. Describe the infant's actions. Example: "Deondre, you are taking the toy fish out of the container! Do you see more things inside the container?"

Offer short descriptions of items. Examples:

- "Our toy animals are soft."
- "I heard a rattle noise when you moved the toy. Did you hear a sound?"
- "Deondre, you are feeling the toy with your hands and mouth."
- "This toy makes a squeaky sound when we squeeze it."

Also describe the infant's actions. Examples:

- "You are taking toys out of the container."
- "The sea animal you are holding has an eye. You are touching its eye."
- "You are shaking the fish. Shake, shake."
- "You are using your mouth to find out about the toy."

You may wish to imitate the infant's actions, such as shaking a toy, if you anticipate this would not distract the infant from exploring the toys. Pace the activity so the infant has time to hold and manipulate as many toys as he/she wishes.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

What to Look For—Option 2

The key aspect of the activity is exploration of the materials. Encourage the infant in the way he/she is playing with the toys. Allow the infant to lead the activity. Some infants may be interested in removing all of the items, and other infants may take out one item at a time and examine it closely. Playing with the container may be of interest to some infants. There are many ways to play with the soft toys and container. The colors and noise-making features of the four sea creatures are likely to be appealing to infants.

Mobile infants have experience with toys that are hard and soft. The container may introduce a new idea; toys can be in the container and toys can be taken out of the container.

ELM does not recommend coaxing an infant to play with the toys in a particular way. Simply observe the infant's actions and talk about what is most interesting to him/her. The activity may go on for several minutes. Bring the activity to a close when you see the infant losing interest.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ If the infant does not remove any items from the container, offer gentle encouragement by removing one item and handing it to the infant. Describe your actions. ■ Provide ample time for the infant to act on the play materials.

Enrichment ■ Demonstrate how to put an item in the container. The infant may enjoy returning all toys to the container at the conclusion of the activity.

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BLOCK 1

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant looks at and manipulates different types of toys.

Key Concepts
Soft
Hard
Shake
Ring

Materials Needed
Melissa & Doug Fishbowl Fill and Spill
Two infant bells

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Place the two bells in the container with the four soft sea creatures.

Mobile infants will enjoy a game of finding and exploring two types of toys presented in a container. Begin by sitting on the floor facing an infant who sits well without support. Place the container of toys in front of the infant. Invite the infant to explore the contents of the container. Wait for the infant to respond.

Some infants may be excited to reach inside the container. Other infants may benefit from a demonstration.

Observe the infant as he/she begins to explore the contents of the container. Some infants may be intent on removing all the toys, whereas others may remove one soft toy or bell and spend time exploring its properties. Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You found a bell. It makes sounds when you shake it." Point to your ears and say "I hear our bell."

If the infant removes all the toys, talk about what appears to interest him/her the most. Draw attention to the differences between the soft toys and the hard bell. Also, draw attention to how the two different types of toys can make a noise. Demonstrate shaking a toy that rattles and shaking a bell. Encourage the infant to shake each one. Emphasize key descriptive and action words as you talk with the infant, such as soft, hard, shake, and ring. Join the infant in ringing bells together.

If there is a pause in the activity, hold a bell and soft toy in your palms. Offer both to the infant. Ask "Do you want a bell or a sea creature?" Support a back-and-forth interaction with the infant.

What to Look For—Option 3

Becoming mobile represents a big change for an infant. Crawling allows an infant to move toward objects and get ahold of them. Often infants shake and mouth new objects they encounter. Providing a variety of materials and textures stimulates curiosity and exploration. Maintaining your focus on the infant's intentions and exploration is one way to support the important work

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

that engages infants. Learning about the properties of objects, such as soft and hard, cool, warm, sound producing and quiet, requires an infant to focus his/her attention on play. By staying close and paying attention, the infant is encouraged to explore and gets the message what he/she does is important. Describing each object and action helps an infant become more aware of language and further supports cognitive development.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If an infant does not begin to explore items in the container, peek into the container and describe what you see. Example: "Ashlynn, I see some toys inside." Another approach is to pull one toy to the top of the container opening so the infant can see part of it.

Enrichment ■ Encourage an infant to put one toy into the container. ■ Place one bell into the container and shake it. Describe the bell and its sound. Example: "Our bell is in the container. We cannot see it. We hear it moving and ringing."

Interest Area

Materials Needed: mobiles, small toys, board book, art cards, play mat, hanging toys, cloth bag with stacking rings, soft vehicles and animals

Place mobiles in novel spots in your room. Encourage nonmobile infants to watch and reach for mobiles. On another day, arrange small toys infants can view, touch, and/or manipulate. Infants may bring objects to the mouth to explore textures and shapes. When the infant is done with the toy, put the toy in a basket to be washed. Open a board book and place it on the floor close to a nonmobile infant to see. Hang infant art cards for infants to view.

For an early mobile infant who is learning to reach, a simple play mat with flexible arches can be used during floor play. An infant's development is supported by offering one or two hanging toys. Place several small toys in a dish or basket on the floor near an infant who is beginning to roll over and creep.

Place interesting play materials in containers for mobile infants to discover. Example: a cloth bag with stacking rings. Arrange soft vehicles and animals at a level crawling infants can explore. Infants who can stand will enjoy being able to reach a hanging toy by himself/herself. Display books in several areas of the room. Exploration will be more focused when infants have a few well-chosen playthings. Too many toys can distract infants from prolonged exploration.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: magazines, tape, flashlights

The goal of helping infants visually attend to objects may be easily extended to older children in a family child care setting. Young children enjoy looking intentionally and finding things. Play an *I Spy* game during play periods indoors or outside. Adapt the clues to the age of the children, remembering most toddlers will not know color names. Examples of *I Spy* items for toddlers include a soft bear and a firetruck. Examples of *I Spy* items for preschool-age and older children include something purple and a toy emergency vehicle.

Another option is to cut pictures from magazines and tape them to your ceiling. Let children shine flashlights on the pictures, or simply lay on the floor to identify the images.

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BLOCK 1

Paying Attention

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

An infant watches and touches a moving object with caregiver guidance.

Key Concepts
Watch

Touch

Materials Needed
1 textured cloth fish toy

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

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

ACT: [*Hold the toy fish about 12 inches from the infant and begin moving it slightly from side to side.*]

ASK: Do you see the fish?

[*Pause and acknowledge the infant's response. Describe any visual attention the infant gives to the toy. Example: "I see you are watching the fish, Antoine. The fish is moving back and forth."*]

ACT: [*Move the toy fish a little farther to one side and back toward the infant's middle. Describe the infant's response. Example: "Our 'fishy' is over here. You are watching the fish move."*

If the infant maintains a visual focus on the item, move it up slightly and continue to move it slowly from side to side. Describe your actions. Example: "I am moving our fish up higher."

Slowly move the fish toward the infant's middle. Describe your actions. Example: "I am moving the fish so you can touch it." Encourage the infant to touch or grasp the fish. If the infant is not able to grasp the item, hold it near the infant's hands so he/she can touch and feel it.

Watch the infant's responses throughout the activity. Use strategies, such as the following, to encourage the infant's attention to the toy fish:

- *Describe the infant's actions with the toy. Example: "You are reaching out and touching the fish."*
- *Ask the infant how the toy feels. Example: "How does the fish feel?"*
- *Describe characteristics of the toy, such as color and texture. Example: "Our fish is blue and green. Let's touch it. The fish feels soft and smooth!"*
- *Respond to any infant vocalizations. Example: "I hear you talking. You are cooing. I think you like touching our fish."*

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Paying Attention *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest (such as looking elsewhere). Example: "You are done looking at the fish. I will put the fish away. We can do something else now."]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you describe what happened. Example: "We watched our fish today. The fish went back and forth. Then you touched the fish! It felt smooth. You smiled while you touched our fish."*]

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BLOCK 1

Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

An infant watches a moving object and manipulates the object with caregiver guidance.

Key Concepts
Watch
Touch
Hold

Materials Needed
1 textured cloth fish toy

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant who can grasp an object to sit on your lap to play with a toy. Turn the infant slightly so that he/she is secure in your arms but able to make some eye contact. Introduce the toy fish by holding it in the infant's view and moving it slowly from side to side. Encourage the infant to watch the fish as it moves in front of him/her. Example: "The fish is moving back and forth. Let's watch the fish move around!" Describe the infant's visual attention to the toy. Example: "You are moving your eyes to see the fish. You are watching the fish move."

Slowly move the toy fish toward the infant and invite him/her to touch or to hold it. If the infant initially appears reluctant to hold the toy, hold it near the infant's hands so he/she can touch and feel it. Talk with the infant about his/her actions with the toy fish. Examples: "You are touching the fish. You are feeling the smooth scales." "You are holding the fish, Camille. You are moving the fish back and forth like I did."

Monitor closely the infant's reactions to the activity. Acknowledge any responses to the toy. Example: "You are smiling and cooing at the fish. I think you like playing with our toy fish!"

Wrap up the activity and put the fish away when the infant shows signs of disinterest. Example: "I can see that you are watching Mia play. I think you are done playing with our fish today, Isaac. We will put it away." Acknowledge the infant's focus on the toy during the activity. Example: "We had fun playing with our toy fish, Christian! You watched the fish move back and forth. You held the fish. Then you moved it back and forth too! When you were done, we put the fish away."

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BLOCK 1

Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

An infant watches a moving object and independently manipulates the object with caregiver encouragement.

Key Concepts
Watch
Touch
Hold

Materials Needed
1 textured cloth fish toy

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant who can sit independently and grasp an object to sit with you on the floor to play with a toy. Sit facing the infant with a smile and introduce the toy fish. Hold the fish in front of the infant and pretend to make the fish "swim" slowly from side to side. Encourage the infant to watch the fish move for a few moments. Example: "You are watching our fish swim. You are moving your eyes to watch the fish." Invite the infant to touch or hold the fish. Example: "Now it is your turn to play with our fish. Would you like to hold the fish?"

Encourage the infant to hold, look at, and move the toy fish. Talk with the infant about his/her actions with the toy. Examples: "You are holding the fish. You are touching the fish's eyes. What are you going to do next?" Acknowledge the infant's responses to the activity. Example: "You are smiling and waving the fish back and forth. I can hear you cooing. You are having fun playing with the fish."

Transition out of the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest with the toy. Acknowledge the infant's focus on the toy during the activity. Example: "You watched the fish swimming up and then down, Alex. Then you held the fish. You felt the fish's crinkly fins and tail. When you were done, we put the fish away."

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BLOCK 1

Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of these options supports young infants in learning to visually focus on a moving object. Adding the sense of touch further enhances the infant's experience of focusing on an object. Watch the infant's interest in the toy closely to determine how much to move the toy or how long to offer the activity. Some infants may enjoy watching you move the toy, whereas others may be eager to hold the toy themselves. Remember that infants often explore new objects with their mouths as well as hands. Infants may focus on the toy for several minutes, or begin to lose interest much sooner. Infants may show disinterest by looking away, fussing, squirming, or crawling/walking away. Acknowledge each infant's focus on the toy during the activity.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ If an infant appears to feel uncomfortable sitting upright on your lap (Option 2) or sitting independently facing you (Option 3), you may wish to offer a prior option in this activity plan. Ensure each infant has the opportunity to enjoy and be successful at one of the activity options in this plan. ■ If an infant needs extra support to focus on the moving toy, bring the fish closer and use slower movements. Repeat a simple movement, such as gently touching the infant's chest with the fish, moving it away (while still in view), and then bringing it back. Talk with the infant about your actions. Example: "The fishy touched your chest! Now the fish is going away. Look! It's coming back!"

Enrichment ■ Young infants may enjoy participating with the toy fish in different positions. Try engaging with an infant who is laying on his/her tummy or on his/her back while being supported by an infant cushion. ■ If the infant seems to be enjoying your movement of the fish, offer an additional action, such as moving the toy to touch the infant's feet and then back again. ■ Vary the position of the toy and observe the infant's response when it is farther away.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several toys with interesting features, such as the toy fish in the activity plan

During floor time, select a toy to engage one or several nearby infants. Follow the steps outlined in one of the activity options and encourage infants to focus on the toy as you move it around them. Describe your actions with the toy to encourage the infants to follow your movements. Give each infant a similar toy to touch and hold. Talk with infants about their actions and responses as they explore the toys.

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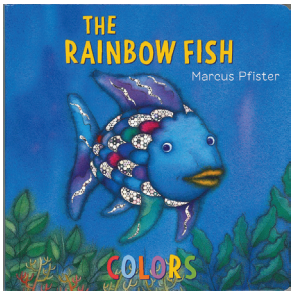
Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: colorful book, such as *The Rainbow Fish* by Marcus Pfister



Select a book that is interesting and colorful to support infants' engagement and focus during the activity. Read the book enthusiastically with all the children in your care. Make frequent eye contact with each infant to encourage engagement in the activity. Invite infants and older children to touch pictures in the book that are of interest. Infants and toddlers may enjoy holding a toy related to the story.

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BLOCK 1

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal

Social interaction skills

A young infant participates in a responsive interaction with a caregiver.

Key Concepts

Smile

Sounds

Materials Needed

None

Also Promotes

Cognitive

Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Sit in a comfortable position holding an infant in your arms or on your lap, facing you.*

CDC Milestones in Action

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Good morning, Hannah. I am happy to see you!" Make a happy face toward the infant and watch for his/her response. The young infant may show interest in interacting by vocalizing, gazing at you, or reaching toward you. Acknowledge the infant's reactions, including any vocalizations or gestures. Examples: "You are watching me, Samuel. You are smiling! I am smiling back at you!" "I hear you saying 'ba-ba-ba.' You are talking to me, Caris! 'Ba-ba-ba.'"]

ACT: [*Continue to encourage responsive interactions with the infant using strategies, such as the following:*

- *Encourage the infant to enter into an exchange of* sounds *with you. Initiate the sounds by using a phrase that includes word repetition or a nonsense phrase of early babble sounds. Examples: "Hello baby, baby!" "Ba-ba, ma-ma. Ba-ba, ma-ma." The infant may respond by imitating your sounds or making a new sound. Acknowledge the infant's reactions and repeat any vocalizations.*
- *Describe the infant's actions. Example: "Look at you kick your legs! Hannah is kicking, kicking! Hannah has strong legs!"*
- *Introduce and talk about a here-and-now topic the infant is likely to find interesting, such as the following:*
  - *Characteristics of the infant. Examples: "I see your pretty brown eyes. And here is your nose." "Look at these little toes! Tap, tap, tap—I'm tapping your toes!"*
  - *What other infants are currently doing in the room. Example: "Cayden is rolling a ball on the floor. Look at Cayden's red ball!"*
  - *Current weather. Example: "It is raining today. Look at the rain! The rain is making a puddle on our sidewalk. Did you get wet in the rain?"*

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

- *Describe your movements and the infant's experiences. Examples: "I am turning you so you can see the other babies in our classroom. You are listening to the sounds other children are making." "I am going to stand up now. Here we go. Up, up, up!"*
- *Watch the infant's reactions throughout the activity. Encourage all vocalizations, smiles, and other facial expressions by making similar faces and sounds.*]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of what happened during the activity. Example: "Samuel, we had a good time talking together! You made some sounds, and I tried to make your sounds. You smiled and I smiled! We looked at the rain outside. Thank you for sharing time with me."*]

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BLOCK 1

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant participates in a responsive interaction with a caregiver, focused on a cause-and-effect toy.

Key Concepts
Smile
Look
Touch

Materials Needed
Fisher-Price Brilliant Basics Boppin' Activity Bugs®

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit with you on the floor or at a low table to explore a new toy. Encourage the infant to touch and explore the pop-up toy. Facilitate warm, responsive interactions with the infant as he/she manipulates the toy using strategies, such as the following:

- Describe the infant's actions with the toy. Example: "You are touching the buttons on our toy. Look! The yellow button is bumpy. Do you feel the bumps?"
- Provide support, if needed, to help the infant release a pop-up animal. Example: "You are touching the yellow button. I wonder what will happen if you push the button. Should we try? I can help you!"
- Recognize the infant's persistence with the new toy. Example: "You are pushing the blue button. You are trying so hard to pop up the animal! Can I help you? Let's try sliding the button this way. Pop! We did it!"
- Smile and show enthusiasm for the infant's efforts and success in manipulating the toy. Example: "Look at you, Carlos! You are smiling so big! You worked so hard, and you did it! You popped up all the animals! I bet you feel proud."
- Focus on the positive interactions between you and the infant as he/she explores the toy. Watch for opportunities to share attention, smiles, and laughter. Respond to the infant's reactions by acknowledging and imitating his/her vocalizations and facial expressions. Example: (Smile and laugh with the infant.) "You are laughing at the silly yellow bee, Natalia! You pushed the bee down. Then, pop! Up comes the bee again! You are having silly fun!"

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Older infants participate in responsive interactions with a caregiver during a song.

Key Concepts
Smile

Song

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Physical/Health

Sit on the floor facing several older infants to share a song. Some infants may wish to sit close to you, whereas others may prefer to stand close by. Explain that we are going to sing a song. Smile and make eye contact with each infant as you introduce the song. Modify the song, "If You're Happy and You Know It," by singing "make a smile" instead of "clap your hands." Sing the song with enthusiasm, offering a big smile when you get to the word smile in the song. Point to the engaging smile on your face and encourage infants to smile, too. Some infants will respond to your smile, and others may wave their arms or bounce their bodies to the song. Repeat the song with additional verses if the infants remain interested. Some infants will participate by moving their bodies, whereas others may prefer to watch and listen. Acknowledge each infant's participation in the activity.

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BLOCK 1

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of these options encourages warm and responsive interactions with infants. As infants learn about themselves and others, they are beginning to understand that eye contact, smiles, and vocalizations are positive ways to gain and hold the attention of others. Encourage these ways to interact by making similar facial expressions and sounds in response to the infant's actions. Infants may also show interest in interacting with you by reaching toward you, waving their arms, or kicking their legs. Engage the infant in back-and-forth interactions by watching, listening, and talking with a friendly tone. The tone of your voice and your responsiveness to the infant are just as important as the actual words used. Watch for signals that suggest the infant wishes to continue interacting. If the infant looks away, fusses, or turns his/her body away from you, shift the activity to allow a break from the interaction.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ As you interact with an infant, remember to pause frequently for the infant to respond. Strive to interact with the infant in a "serve-and-return" (back-and-forth) manner, rather than the infant simply watching you talk or move. ■ Reposition an infant slightly to give him/her an option of where to look. ■ Watch each infant's reactions to the activities closely. Some infants may enjoy a livelier, more enthusiastic activity, whereas others may prefer calm, soothing interactions.

Enrichment ■ Offer additional sounds or facial expressions for the infant to imitate in Option 1. ■ While engaging with the toy in Option 2, encourage the infant to take turns with you in making the animals pop up. ■ Provide additional songs that the infants are familiar with during Option 3. Older infants may enjoy songs with simple hand movements, such as "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

Interest Area

Materials Needed: large mirror

Provide opportunities for infants to explore their reflections, along with yours, in a large mirror. Imitate the infants' facial expressions in the mirror, including smiles or silly faces. Invite older infants to imitate your facial expressions. Infants may enjoy watching their reflections while making different noises in the mirror. Many infants will not recognize their own reflections in the mirror, but will likely delight in looking at the baby staring back at them!

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

Children of all ages enjoy songs with movement. Engage children in familiar songs, such as "If You're Happy and You Know It." Infants and young toddlers will enjoy watching and listening to the song. Older children can demonstrate the actions as well as sing many of the words. Make frequent eye contact with each infant to encourage interest in the interactions.

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BLOCK 1

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

A nonmobile infant practices body balance and control as part of guided tummy time with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Lift head

Look

Materials Needed
Several small toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Be Prepared: The activity description suggests use of one or several different toys to engage the infant's interest, including a nonbreakable mirror, a doll or puppet, a bell, and bold pictures.

BEGIN: [*Provide a short supervised tummy time period for an infant to strengthen his/her neck and back. Lay the infant on his/her stomach on a firm surface on the floor. Sit on the floor very close to the infant. Place several colorful toys on the floor around the infant, about 12 inches away. Talk to the infant with a friendly, assuring tone. Bend lower to let the infant see your face. Example: "Hi Rose. You are on your tummy. Now you see me. You are doing a good job lifting your head up. You see our toys."*]

ACT: [*Gently place your hand on the infant. Talk to the infant about the experience in your own words as if he/she understands you. Example: "This is tummy time. You are resting your cheek on the pad and looking at the toy. I am right here with you. You get stronger when we play at tummy time."*

Hold one toy close for the infant to easily see. Encourage the infant to look at the toy by moving it slightly. Positively acknowledge the infant's efforts to raise his/her head and to look. Example: "Now you are holding your head up. You can see our toy."

Consider using one of several other materials that can be used to create fun and interest for a pleasurable tummy time:

- *A nonbreakable mirror. Encourage the infant to look at the mirror.*
- *Doll, puppet, or cloth animals with a face. Animate a doll with movement, talk, and a friendly voice.*
- *Toys that make sounds. Ring a small bell or shake a rattle for the infant.*
- *Bold pictures. Show the infant books or art cards.*

If an infant begins to fuss or protest, encourage the infant to look at you or a toy. If your attempt to calm the infant is unsuccessful, gently end the tummy time session.]

RECAP: You laid on your tummy and looked at toys. Your neck and back get stronger when you hold your head up. You worked hard to hold up your head!

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

What to Look For—Option 1

Infants are generally happy to move their arms, kick their feet, and turn their head while laying on their back. Tummy time offers a different position that some infants may not readily welcome when it is first introduced. Because tummy time helps an infant develop strength and body control, it is a valuable experience to offer, perhaps in very brief periods at first. Some infants may begin with only a few seconds of tummy time. Respond to crying and fussing immediately. Do not offer the activity when an infant is tired. It is important to consistently talk with the infant and offer some novelty. Remember that the sound of your voice and closeness provide assurance for the infant. As infants gain more experience and strength, you will observe infants using both arms to lift their head and chest.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Provide an appropriate support pillow and position the infant so his/her chest is supported. ■ Sing a familiar song to the infant where he/she can see your face.

Enrichment ■ If an infant reaches for a toy, move it close enough to touch. ■ If an infant is ready to begin rolling over, clear the space next to his/her body.

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BLOCK 1

Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An infant practices crawling or creeping to an appealing destination created by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Moving

Materials Needed
Infant mirror
Small toys

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language

This activity is for infants who are beginning to creep with their tummy on the floor or crawl on hands and knees. Create an appealing destination that the infant can reach with an appropriate level of effort. Arrange several desirable toy figures in front of an infant mirror. Sit on the floor and invite a mobile infant to explore the figures in front of the mirror. Describe the infant's movements. Offer the infant one of the toys. Talk with the infant about his/her skills in moving around and maybe changing positions. Acknowledge and celebrate the infant's hard work and persistence.

What to Look For—Option 2

Two dimensions of the infant's development need your attention in this activity. One is your existing knowledge of the infant's interests and motor skills so you can create (a) a highly desirable item or activity at the destination and (b) offer a challenging yet achievable distance to the destination. The other dimension to consider is how to respond to an infant who changes directions while creeping or crawling to the destination or encounters a problem, such as ending up in a corner that he/she does not have skills to navigate. The infant who appears to veer in a direction that will not lead to the desired destination may correct his/her course with a simple reminder of the location of the desired object. Example: If a bell is at the desired destination, ring the bell! Another response is to forget about the destination you created and encourage the infant to creep or crawl where he/she wishes, assuming the passage is safe. See the Extra Support tip for a suggestion on how to handle insurmountable barriers or corners.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Move near a child who is working hard to move to a new area. Give positive affirmations to the child as he/she moves toward his/her goal. Use your knowledge of the child's gross motor development to know when to offer physical assistance. ■ If an infant creeps into a corner and needs assistance turning around, give just enough help so the infant can begin to learn how to turn on his/her own. ■ If a crawling infant becomes distressed because of a barrier or is unsure how to navigate a corner, use an appropriate amount of physical assistance plus a calm voice to talk with the infant about refocusing his/her goal.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

Enrichment ■ Place a small obstacle between a mobile infant and the interesting destination for the child to navigate. Example: Place a textured play mat for the infant to crawl over on his/her way to the destination.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

Mobile infants participate in a brief song that encourages up and down arm movements.

Key Concepts
Move
Up
Down

Materials Needed
Dolls—1 per infant and staff

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Sign and Sing Along: Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear by Annie Kubler

Be Prepared: Cloth animals may be used instead of or in addition to dolls.

This activity is for infants who can crawl and sit well balanced and for infants who have begun to walk. Invite several infants to sit on the floor with you for a game and song.

Give each infant one doll or cloth animal. Describe what the infants are holding. Example: "Everyone has a toy to hold for our game and song. Lucy has a bear and Mateo has a baby doll. We will call the dolls and animals our friends." Demonstrate moving your animal and invite the infants to also move their doll or animal. Example: "Let's all make our animals or dolls move. We can make them move!"

Point to your ear and say "Please listen to the words. Are you ready?" Offer the following song and corresponding actions. Encourage infants to follow your actions.

Our friends go up, up!
[*Demonstrate lifting the doll with two hands.*]

Our friends go down, down.
[*Move the doll to the floor.*]

Our friends can touch the sky.
[*Hold the doll up. Stand if all infants can walk.*]

All our friends sit back down.
[*Maintain or return to sitting position on the floor.*]

Repeat the sequence if the infants are interested in moving the toys again. Conclude the activity by demonstrating and inviting infants to hold the dolls on their laps.

What to Look For—Option 3

An informal gathering at this young age may be quite brief, as described in the *ELM Curriculum User Guide: Birth–36 Months*. Presenting one activity and related song is often sufficient. If you notice infants who seem to want to continue with a song or actions, offer a simple finger play or sing a familiar song with movements.

Some infants will be very interested in imitating your actions. Some infants may play with the doll or animal in their own way. Anticipate that some infants

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

may not easily move a toy or listen to your movement guidance. Use your cheerful voice and enthusiasm to create interest in moving the toys up and down. Offer praise and support for infants' efforts.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Sing the song and do the actions slowly, especially the first time. ■ Demonstrate raising the toy up and down while emphasizing the words up and down.

Enrichment ■ Encourage children to repeat the word up with you. ■ During a follow-up play period, use toys an infant has chosen to practice moving a toy up and down.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: colorful mat, small toys, stacking cups, balls, large vehicles, dolls, soft animals

Sit on the floor with nonmobile infants. Allow the infants to move freely on a colorful mat. Place several small toys near the infants. Use your time on the floor to foster the natural interests of each infant.

Set up a destination with stacking cups and balls for crawling infants. Place balls on top of the cups. Infants will be curious and interested in separating the toys.

Walking infants will enjoy large vehicles to push along the floor. Arrange dolls and soft animals on low surfaces for infants to hold or carry. Think of yourself as a coach who is supporting numerous emerging skills of increasingly mobile infants. Move around the play space to offer support to each infant.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *The Gingerbread Man* by Parragon Books

Some preschool-age children may enjoy talking to infants or singing a little song during the tummy time activity. Explain to children that the infants are getting stronger and will someday learn to crawl. Remind the preschool-age children they were infants and learned to crawl and walk! Offer a challenge for preschool-age and older children by suggesting different ways to move and freeze. Make up your own version of a move and freeze game. Explain freeze means holding completely still. Make sure each child standing has plenty of space to move freely. Some possibilities include: Move your arms like a bird flying. Move your arms like you are swimming. Stand on one foot. Stand on one foot and move your arms.

Share the book *The Gingerbread Man* by Parragon Books. Emphasize the way people, animals, and the Gingerbread Man move their bodies in the pictures.

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BLOCK 2 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of forest animals.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages, lift flaps, and communicate about forest animals.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold, lift flaps, and turn the pages of a book and communicate about forest animals.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) An infant looks at and listens to a caregiver describe items and activities seen through a window.

Option 2 (OO) An infant uses his/her hands to play with a small amount of water on a tray.

Option 3 (IG) Infants play with floating balls in a small amount of water.

Self-Regulation

Getting Calm

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while being held in a caregiver's arms.

Option 2 (OO) An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while sitting on a caregiver's lap.

Option 3 (OO) An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while standing and holding hands with a caregiver.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in back-and-forth interactions with a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in back-and-forth interactions with a caregiver focused on block play.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in back-and-forth interactions with a caregiver during play with a ball.

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (OO) An infant practices reaching for a toy while lying on his/her back or tummy.

Option 2 (OO) An infant practices reaching for and grasping a toy while sitting.

Option 3 (OO) An infant practices reaching for, grasping, and holding toys of different shapes while sitting.

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

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BLOCK 2

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of forest animals.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Touch

Materials Needed
Peek-a-Boo Forest by Lamaze

Also Promotes
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Sit with a young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*]

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

ASK: I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the owl? You can touch the owl!

[*Point to the owl. Pause and watch for the infant's response. The young infant may show interest in the book by vocalizing, turning toward you, gazing at the picture, or reaching out and batting at the book. Acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the owl, Julian. I will hold the book closer, so you can touch the owl!"*]

EXPLAIN: There are pictures of animals in our book. The animals are hiding! Let's open the book and see what we find!

ACT: [*Open the book to the first page. Point to and talk with the infant about the picture. It is not necessary to read the text as infants will benefit from hearing you talk about the pictures as you share the book together. Some infants will enjoy the game of Peekaboo as you lift the flaps to reveal the animal underneath. Example: "Who is hiding behind the tree? Let's look under the flap! Peekaboo!"*

Continue to talk with the infant about book pictures using strategies, such as the following:

- *Point to and describe pictures. Example: "Look, the moon is in the sky. (Point.) Here is a lightning bug. (Point.) The lightning bug has a bright tail. See? I wonder what is hiding under the leaf. Let's lift the flap and look! Peekaboo!"*
- *Spend a little more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the mama bear and her two baby bears. They are sleeping in their den. Peekaboo, bears!"*
- *Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You cooed when we looked at the green leaf. We are listening to the*

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

sound the book makes when we touch it! 'Crackle, crackle' says the book!"

- *Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book sharing. Pause and slowly lift the flaps, saying "peekaboo" with enthusiasm as you reveal the picture underneath.*

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book together! Our book had pictures of animals that were hiding. We lifted the flaps and said "peekaboo!" when we found the animals! This was a fun book to read together!"*]

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BLOCK 2

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages, lift flaps, and communicate about forest animals.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Touch

Materials Needed
Peek-a-Boo Forest by Lamaze

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "See the picture of the owl? The owl is going to hide. Our book is about animals that are hiding. We can touch the flaps and listen to crackling sounds. Let's the read the book and find the animals!"

Open the book and begin looking at and talking about the pictures with the infant. Encourage the infant to help you turn the pages and touch the flaps. Use strategies, such as the following:

- Point to and name objects pictured. Example: "We found the owl! Peekaboo owl! The owl was hiding under the leaf. See the moon in the sky? It is nighttime."
- Invite the infant to touch the flaps and listen to the sounds. Example: "Here, you can touch the log. What do we hear? Let's see what animal is hiding under the log! Peekaboo!"
- Describe what the infant is looking at. Example: "You are looking at the yellow moose. The moose has brown antlers. The moose has a smiling mouth. I think the moose is happy!"
- Spend a little more time talking about pictures of particular interest to the infant. You may wish to provide additional context or information. Example: "You are tapping the fish. The fish are swimming in the blue water. I wonder what animal is hiding by the fish. You can open the flap and see!"
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are smiling and cooing at the owl. The owl has big eyes. You are touching the leaf the owl was hiding under! Do you hear the leaf crinkling when you touch it?"
- Help the infant connect book information to their experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "The mama bear is sleeping with her baby bears. The bears are going night night in their den. Where do you go night night?"
- Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book reading. Create anticipation as you slowly lift the flap, and then show enthusiasm as you say "peekaboo!" and reveal the animal underneath. Example: "Are you ready to lift the flap and see what animal is hiding? What do you think we will see? Please help me lift the flap!"

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

- Follow the infant's cues about the pace of looking at pictures. Turn the pages as slowly or as quickly as the infant seems to prefer. Depending on the infant's interest, you may read the text as written or you may simply talk about the pictures on each page. Watch the infant's cues to know when to stop the book reading.
- Conclude the session by recognizing the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Kamilah. You smiled and kicked your legs when we found the animals that were hiding! You had fun helping me lift the flaps. You listened to the crackling sounds! I think you liked this book."

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BLOCK 2

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language

An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold, lift flaps, and turn the pages of a book and communicate about forest animals.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Touch
Peekaboo

Materials Needed
Peek-a-Boo Forest by Lamaze

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or prefer to stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to hold the book, turn the pages, and/or lift the flaps.

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to the raised picture on the book cover. Example: "Look at the picture of the owl. The owl is going to hide in our book! Our book is about animals that are hiding. We can play *Peekaboo* with the animals and find them under the flaps! When we touch the flaps, we can listen to the crackling sounds they make! Would you like to help me turn the page?" The infant may help you turn the page or turn the pages independently. Use strategies, such as the following to share the book:

- Point to and label objects in the pictures. Example: (Point to each.) "This is the moon in the night sky. Do you see the lightning bug flying? The lightning bug has a tail that lights up! Look, here is a ladybug on a leaf. Let's see what is hiding under the leaf!"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you label. Example: "Look, what do you see sitting on the log? I see a green frog! Can you point to the green frog?"
- Describe what the infant is looking at and provide additional context or information. Example: "You are pointing to the owl. The owl has big eyes and an orange beak. The owl says 'whoo, whoo.' Please say 'whoo, whoo' with me!"
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'peekaboo!' You found the raccoon! Would you like to play again? You can lift the flap. Peekaboo raccoon!"
- Help the infant connect book information to their experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "The mama bear is sleeping with her baby bears. Bears sleep in a den. People sleep in houses. Do you sleep in a bed?"
- Encourage the infant to say "peekaboo" with you. Example: "Are you ready to lift the flap? You can say 'peekaboo' with me! Here we go. Let's see what we find!" Also, encourage the infant to repeat the name of the item found under the flap.
- Follow the infant's cues as to how quickly or slowly to turn the pages.

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

Conclude the session by recognizing the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Sergio. You lifted the flaps and helped me say 'peekaboo!' You listened to sounds the pages made when you touched them. You pointed to the green frog! We had fun reading this book together."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Many infants will delight in the familiar game of *Peekaboo* when the flaps of this book are lifted. The cloth pages with crinkling flaps encourage further exploration by the infant. In addition to helping you say "peekaboo!" an older infant may enjoy repeating the name of the animal found under a flap. Generously acknowledge any attempts to say the name.

Infants express interest in a book in different ways. An infant may gaze, point, touch, or use his/her hands to bat at or tap the pages. Infants may also express interest in the book by cooing, babbling, and later saying a version of the repeated word 'peekaboo.' Some infants may want to hold and explore the book independently. Infants may hold, turn, crinkle, and mouth the book. Older infants may also express interest by pointing or turning the pages in the book to a particular picture. Babies may want to repeat the *Peekaboo* game several times on the same page.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ This book provides different options for exploring words. An infant may benefit from a primary focus, such as playing *Peekaboo* with the flaps, talking about and pointing to the animals, or touching and listening to the sounds of the crackling flaps. It is not necessary to pursue all options during a single book sharing session. ■ Hold the book close for a young infant to touch.

Enrichment ■ Invite the infant to play *Peekaboo* with you after the book sharing. The infant may want to cover his/her eyes or watch you cover yours. Infants may feel more comfortable playing *Peekaboo* with you briefly covering only your eyes, leaving your face in view of the infant during the game ■ Invite up to three infants to share the book and play *Peekaboo* as the flaps are lifted. ■ Provide the opportunity for an interested infant to hold and explore the book independently after the book sharing.

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BLOCK 2

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of cloth and vinyl books in a basket

Infants explore new objects with their mouths as well as their hands and eyes. Provide opportunities for young infants to safely explore books in the ways that they choose. Cloth and vinyl books can be mouthed without being damaged. This helps young infants to develop an interest and understanding of how books work. As infants grow older, they develop the ability to begin learning appropriate book handling skills. Begin to show how to hold a book and turn the pages. Some infants may benefit from having a small toy to mouth while learning how to handle a book.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Peek-a-Boo Forest* by Lamaze, assortment of stuffed animals or animal figures, several small blankets or scarves

Although this cloth book may appear to be for babies only, older children will likely enjoy participating in a book reading. Invite older children to guess which animals are hiding under the flaps. Toddlers and older children can call out the word 'peekaboo' with you as you read the book. After the book sharing, invite older children to play *Peekaboo* with the animals for the infants and younger toddlers to watch and enjoy. Some infants and younger toddlers may pull the blanket off of a favorite animal. Older children may enjoy "leading" this activity.

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BLOCK 2

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant looks at and listens to a caregiver describe items and activities seen through a window.

Key Concepts
Look

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Black on White by Tana Hoban

Look, Look! by Peter Linenthal

BEGIN: [*Pick up an infant. Say "hello" in a gentle voice and mention an item that attracted the infant's interest in the Block 1 tour of your room. In the suggested opening comment below, a mobile is mentioned.*]

We are learning about things in our room. We looked at a mobile and some other things in our room.

Today we can go on another tour.

ASK: [*Move near a window that permits views of objects or actions of others. Avoid a window the infant may associate with the arrival or departure of a parent or primary caregiver.*]

Would you like to look out our window?

[*Pause for and comment on the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the window."*]

ACT: Let's see what is outside our window.

[*Hold the infant securely next to a window. Look outdoors (or into a hallway). Describe what the infant sees. Examples: "There are children playing." "There is someone pushing a cart."*

Point (if you can do so safely) and ask simple questions that help draw the infant's attention to objects or activities outside the window. Examples: "We see children playing with toys." "We see the bird feeder outside our window."

Use short phrases to describe what you and the infant see. Examples: "Children playing. We see children with toys." "Leaves. You see leaves. The leaves are moving."

Describe the infant's responses to what he/she is viewing. Example: "You are excited. You are kicking your legs."]

RECAP: Today we went on another tour of our room. We looked out our window.

[*Describe the items or activities you and the infant saw. Example: "We saw children playing. We also saw a tree." Also, describe the infant's reaction. Example: "You kicked your legs when you saw the children with toys."*]

Elm Early Learning Matters

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

What to Look For—Option 1

Initially, an Infant may respond by focusing on the window rather than the objects or activities outside the window. Describe the window and the infant's actions. Example: "You are touching the window. The window is smooth." If after a minute the infant does not focus beyond the glass, turn toward the room and describe objects and/or children and their activities.

It may take repeated experiences at the window for an infant to see beyond the glass. If a focus on the window pane continues over time, consider hanging a mobile outside the window that an infant can more readily see. If it is possible at your site, consider placing a bird feeder where infants can see birds.

It may be difficult to determine what an infant is actually seeing. You may wish to describe several possibilities, such as parked vehicles or traffic moving at a distance and a swing located close to the building.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Help an infant focus by carrying him/her to a non-moving object. Then gradually introduce the infant to objects that are moving slowly, such as hanging mobiles or streamers. ■ Infants may enjoy watching colorful scarves and ribbons that you hang outside the window. ■ If it seems especially challenging for an infant to look outside the window, postpone the tour of things outside the window or include some time at the window as part of another tour of the room. ■ Speak slowly. Pause to notice the infant's reactions.

Enrichment ■ Arrange toys in novel places an infant is likely to see on his/her own. ■ Share a book of simple pictures that are similar to objects or activities observed outside the window.

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BLOCK 2

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant uses his/her hands to play with a small amount of water on a tray.

Key Concepts
Water
Touch
Splash

Materials Needed
Non-breakable tray
3–4 tablespoons of water
Towel
Absorbent mat

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Place the clean tray on top of a towel on the floor or on a highchair tray where the infant is sitting. Have dry clothes ready. Consider presenting this sensory exploration after a meal or snack time when the infant is already sitting in a chair with a tray. Another time to present the activity is before a diaper change when it is convenient to use dry clothes for an infant.

Invite an infant to explore a small amount of water on a tray. Sit with the infant facing you. Point to the empty tray and then pour a small amount of water into the tray. Describe the tiny puddle and encourage the infant to touch the water. Generally, infants will enjoy touching the water with both hands. If the tray is placed on the floor, some infants may be comfortable sitting to explore the water.

Describe the infant's actions as he/she explores the water. Infants may splash the water by slapping their hand(s) in the puddle during exploration. It is okay if some infants put their wet hands on their face or hair.

Add a little more water if there is not enough for the infant to see. Use the infant's name as you encourage him/her to touch or splash water.

Bring the activity to an end by saying "We are all done with water play." Before you dry the infant's hands and face, show the infant a dry cloth or towel and explain it is to dry him/her.

What to Look For—Option 2

Infants will enjoy the simple cause-and-effect experience of patting or slapping the water. Some infants may lick the water from their hands, which may indicate thirst. Offer a small drink of water from an infant cup.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Touch the water with your hand and talk about how it looks and feels. ■ Dip your finger in the water and place one drop on the infant's hand.

Enrichment ■ Color the water to make it more visible on the tray. ■ Pour a small stream of water over the infant's hands.

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BLOCK 2

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

Infants play with floating balls in a small amount of water.

Key Concepts
In
Ball
Water

Materials Needed
Sensory table
12 small balls that float
Container for balls
Pitcher of warm water
Dry clothes for each infant

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Collect dry clothes for each infant.

Mobile infants who are able to stand with good balance will be interested in water and floating balls. Invite several infants to put small balls into the sensory table or tub. Emphasize the word in. Show the pitcher of water and explain that you are going to add water to the table (or tub). Pour water into the tub as infants watch. Describe each step of the action. Example: "The water goes in the tub. Balls and water are in our tub." Encourage the infants to touch the water.

Kneel or sit next to the children so you are at their eye level. Demonstrate how to make a ball move by gently pushing it with your finger. Observe the infants' reactions to the water and balls. Encourage infants to touch the balls. Draw attention to how the balls move when the infants touch or push them.

Talk with each infant about his/her individual focus. Describe an action of one infant and pause for his/her response. Some infants may be interested in touching the water and/or splashing. Some infants may be more curious about the balls bobbing in the water.

Bring the activity to a close after 10–15 minutes, or sooner if infants lose interest. If infants are interested in taking the balls out of the tub, encourage them to move the balls into a basket. Show the infants how the water drains out of the tub into a container. For some infants this will be very interesting! Emphasize the concept "the water is all gone." Let the infants know when the activity is finished.

What to Look For—Option 3

Playing with water and floating balls will be exciting and fun for most infants. Infants may rotate in and out of the activity. Some infants may leave the water play activity and return a few minutes later.

Some mobile infants may throw the balls out of the water tub. Consider this action as a communication ("I know that balls are for throwing"). In a gentle manner, tell an infant "Our balls stay in the water." If there is an infant who wants to throw balls, be sure to involve him/her in the process of closing the activity. Example: "We can take the balls out of the water. Let's put them in the container."

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Begin with a couple inches of water only and introduce the balls later in the activity, or the following day. ■ Take a photo of the balls in the water and post it where infants can see it. For the infants who participated, describe the activity later in the day to help them remember. ■ Repeat the activity with balls of all one color.

Enrichment ■ For infants who are interested, offer a terry cloth for wiping the water off the balls before putting them in another location. ■ For further water exploration, give each mobile toddler a small bottle of water to pour out on the sidewalk or the grass. Refill the bottles as needed. Repeating the action is key to learning about water.

Interest Area

Materials needed: books, toys with texture, balls, stacking rings

Provide 20 to 25 books for infants. Place some on a book display and others in baskets. While keeping a couple of favorite books out, rotate half of the books weekly. Share books one-to-one with each infant every day.

For non-mobile infants, provide cloth and board books with pictures of faces, toys with different textures placed in a tummy time spot, and balls on rings for young infants to see. Arrange play materials where infants who creep and crawl may find them. For mobile infants, place small balls onto stacking rings arranged in a line on a low surface. Infants may enjoy moving the balls off and onto the rings.

Family Child Care

Materials needed: water play materials as described below, *Water is Water* by Miranda Paul, *Goodnight Lake* by Adam Gamble

Provide water exploration for toddlers and preschool-age children by placing one type of toy into a sensory tub each day. Prepare the water play materials. Sit or kneel to talk with children about their actions and ideas.

Provide non-breakable bottles and containers children can manage for pouring to foster fine motor skills. Place toy dishes, baby dolls, and no-tears bubbles in the water tub to foster social interactions. Provide ice for children to add to warm water to promote early observation of change in objects. Provide funnels along with containers that are low and wide and long and narrow to promote beginning awareness of volume. Share the books with children one at a time and in small groups.

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BLOCK 2

Getting Calm

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control
A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while being held in a caregiver's arms.

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Become familiar with the words, rhythm, and movement of the "Rig-a-Jig-Jig" song through an online resource or perhaps a co-worker. See the lyrics in this activity description.

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

ASK: Are you ready for a little motion and fun?

[*Pause and acknowledge infant's response. Example: "I see you are looking at me now. Let's move a little bit."*]

ACT: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant. Begin singing the cheerful "Rig-a-Jig-Jig" song with a light bouncing motion. You may gently move your arms up and down, or sway slightly side to side. If the infant seems to enjoy the movement, gradually increase the amount of bounce when you reach the second verse of the song.*

Rig-a-Jig-Jig

Oh, rig-a-jig-jig and away we go,
[*with gentle bounce*]
Away we go, away we go;
Rig-a-jig-jig and away we go,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho.
[*with low-medium bounce*]
As I was walking down the street,
Down the street, down the street,
Little (infant's name) I chanced to meet;
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho.
[*with medium bounce*]
A-rig-a-jig-jig and away we go,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho.
[*bounce slows to stop*]

If the infant develops a frown or appears at all distressed, modify or stop the song. You may wish to offer the song without the movement or continue gentle movements without the song. Talk with the infant about his/her reaction. Example: "You are making a sad face. I think you are feeling unhappy. Let's stop our song and find a way to feel

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

calm and happy." Describe your response to the infant's expression. Example: "You did not want to bounce, so I stopped. We can calm down now."

If the infant enjoys the singing and bouncing, acknowledge his/her pleasure. Example: "What a big smile you have! You like the bouncing with our song!"

At the conclusion of the song, use a quiet, soothing voice to tell the infant it is time for us to rest. Hold the infant and provide comfort, such as patting on the back, quietly singing a familiar song, or offering soft-voice reminders that it is time to calm down. Example of a verbal reminder: "Our song is over. All done. We can calm down now."

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you describe what happened. Examples: "We had fun with our song, Rio! You laughed and told me with your big smile that you liked the song and bouncing. We stopped and I held you while you got calm again." "You didn't like the bouncing, Aiden. We stopped and you calmed yourself. You liked listening to me sing the song quietly while you were getting calm."*]

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while sitting on a caregiver's lap.

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Become familiar with the words, rhythm, and movement of the "Rig-a-Jig-Jig" song through an online resource or perhaps a co-worker. See the lyrics in Option 1.

Invite an infant to sit on your lap for a special song. Place the infant facing you on your lap, holding him/her securely around the waist. Make eye contact and ensure the infant feels secure and ready for the activity. Example: "I am going to sing a song. We will move together! Are you ready?" Pause and acknowledge that the infant is ready. Example: "I see you are smiling. I think you are ready for our song!"

Begin singing "Rig-a-Jig-Jig" in a cheerful voice while bouncing the infant gently on your lap. You may move your legs up and down or slightly sway the infant from side to side. If the infant shows signs of enjoyment, gradually increase the amount of movement as you reach the second verse of the song. If the infant shows signs of disinterest or distress at any time, stop the bouncing and end the song.

Talk with the infant about his/her response to the song and movement. Examples: "You had fun with our song today, Mariah! You smiled and laughed when I bounced you up and down." "You made a sad face, Jaquan. You did not like our song. We stopped bouncing. Now we are getting calm again."

After the song and movement, quietly yet clearly announce that the song is over and it is time to rest and be calm. Use one or more of the following additional ways to help the infant calm down, depending on your knowledge of the infant and the amount of excitement he/she showed during the activity:

- Bring the infant gently toward you, holding his/her back against you and your arms around the infant.
- Quietly hum or sing a familiar song.
- Provide quiet time for the infant to calm him/herself.
- Provide gentle reminders.

Conclude the time together by describing what happened, especially the calming down segment. Example: "We had fun singing and bouncing during our song! We rested when the song was over. Now we are calm."

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BLOCK 2

Getting Calm *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while standing and holding hands with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for mobile infants who are able to stand with assistance. Become familiar with the words, rhythm, and movement of the "Rig-a-Jig-Jig" song through an online resource or perhaps a co-worker. See the lyrics in Option 1.

Invite an infant to join you for a special song. Sit facing the infant, and invite him/her to stand up while holding both of your hands. Alternatively, place your arms firmly around the child's waist during the activity. Make eye contact and ensure the infant feels secure and ready for the activity. Example: "I am going to sing a song and you can dance! Are you ready?"

Begin singing "Rig-a-Jig-Jig" in a cheerful voice and demonstrate bouncing or "dancing" by gently moving your upper body and arms up and down. Smile and encourage the infant to do the same with his/her body. Many mobile infants will naturally begin to bounce up and down during the song, whereas others may need additional prompting or physical support. If the infant shows signs of disinterest or distress at any time, end the song.

Describe the infant's response to the song and movement. Examples: "You had fun dancing while I sang our song today, Taylor!" "You didn't feel like dancing today, but you enjoyed listening to the words of our song!"

After the song and movement, invite the infant to sit and rest with you. The infant may want to sit near you or on your lap. Provide quiet time for the infant to calm him/herself. If needed, support the infant by patting his/her back, quietly humming or singing a favorite song, or offering gentle reminders that it is time to rest.

Recognize and acknowledge the infant's behavior as he/she becomes calm after the song and movement. Example: "You had fun dancing during the song! Now you are sitting with me and resting. We are feeling calm."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of the activity options supports an infant in becoming familiar with a way(s) to calm down after an appropriately exciting experience. Some infants will enjoy the song and movement, and may move their head or bodies in an attempt to bounce themselves. Older infants may understand the idea of "dancing" to music, and will enjoy bouncing up and down as you sing. Some infants may signal they would like you to repeat the song by smiling and making eye contact with you, attempting to bounce themselves, or vocalizing their interest by cooing or laughing aloud. If the infant gives a clear signal, ask if he/she would like to bounce again and repeat the song once the infant is ready. Watch closely for signs of the infant becoming overly excited. Some infants may have difficulty calming down after two or three repeats of the song. Limit the number of times you offer the song. It is important to also

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

watch closely for indications of distress during the activity. Some infants may not enjoy the song and motion, or may prefer the song without the movement. As indicated in the activity descriptions, stop the activity and provide comfort (perhaps with the song alone) if the infant shows any signs of distress.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Reduce the amount of stimulation in the activity if an infant appears to feel uncomfortable sitting upright on your lap or standing while holding your hand. Ensure each infant has the opportunity to enjoy and be successful at one of the activity levels in this plan. ■ If you anticipate an infant may become overly excited during the activity, offer a slower, quieter version of the song. Sing the first verse quietly and slowly, while providing slight, gentle movements. ■ If an infant in Option 1 or 2 needs extra support to become calm, hold the infant while shifting your weight from one foot to the other to create a calming swaying motion. ■ Reposition the infant at the beginning of the calming down segment to provide another signal that it is time to rest.

Enrichment ■ If the infant enjoys the activity, imitate the infant's facial expressions as he/she responds to your singing and movements. ■ Vary the speed of the song and movements by starting slowly, speeding up, and then returning to a slower pace.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: music player with lively and soft music

Play lively music and invite infants to "bounce" or "dance" their bodies to the music. Mobile infants may stand and bounce, whereas young infants may bob their head or sway their upper bodies. Play soft music for several moments prior to stopping the music. Encourage the infants to calm down after the exciting activity using one or more of the strategies in this plan.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: music player with lively and soft music

Children of all ages enjoy moving their bodies to music. Play variations of lively and quieter music while encouraging children to move and dance. Older children may enjoy a stop-and-go game with the music. Infants and toddlers will enjoy watching, and possibly imitating, their older peers. Before moving on to the next activity, invite all the children to rest and sit quietly for a few moments.

The "Rig a Jig Jig" song in Option 1 is a popular silly song from the 19th century in the U.S. A range of different lyrics has been used across the years by early childhood professionals and professional singers.

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BLOCK 2

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates in back-and-forth interactions with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Smile

Hear

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Sit in a comfortable position holding an infant in your arms or on your lap, facing you.*

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Hello, Mateo. I am happy you are here today!" Watch the infant for signs of interest in interacting with you, such as gazing at you, vocalizing, kicking his/her legs, or reaching toward you. Acknowledge the infant's reactions, including any vocalizations, facial expressions, or gestures. Examples: "You are smiling, Jasmine! I smiled at you, and you are smiling at me!"

If the infant shows signs of disinterest (such as looking away, fussing, or turning away from you), end the activity and try engaging him/her at a later time.]

ACT: [*Encourage the infant to engage in a back-and-forth exchange with you by imitating the infant's facial expressions and vocalizations. Example: "You are kicking your legs and talking to me, Lucia. I hear you! 'Da-da-da, da-da-da.'"*

Pause for the infant to respond. Continue to smile and make eye contact with the infant. After a pause, imitate the infant's facial expressions and extend any vocalizations.

To continue the interaction, add a new facial expression and/or vocalization for the infant to react to. Consider using actions, such as the following:

- *Stick out your tongue*
- *Make a surprised face with mouth wide open*
- *Make an interesting sound with your mouth, such as sticking out your tongue and blowing air through your lips*
- *Make early babble sounds using strings of sounds, such as "ba-ba, ga-ga" or "pa-pa-pa, ma-ma-ma."*

Remember to pause and provide space for the infant to respond throughout the interaction. Allow the infant's reactions to lead the activity. If the infant responds with vocalizations, respond with the same. If the infant gazes at your face and shows interest in your facial expressions, respond with a different type of facial expression. Wrap up the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest.]

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of what happened during the activity. Example: "Thank you for spending time with me, Mateo. We made some silly faces. I stuck out my tongue. Then you stuck out your tongue! You smiled so big when I blew raspberries! We had fun together."*]

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BLOCK 2

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant participates in back-and-forth interactions with a caregiver focused on block play.

Key Concepts
Look
Blocks
Play

Materials Needed
Ten small blocks
Medium-size bucket (or bowl)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit with you on the floor to play together with blocks. Place the bucket between you and the infant, with half the blocks next to the infant and half next to you. Invite the infant to play by describing the items and activity. Point to the blocks and bucket as you describe each. Example: "Hi Tiana! Look, I have some blocks for us to play with. Here are blocks for you. Here are blocks for me. Let's have fun putting the blocks in the bucket!"

Begin the play by dropping one of your blocks into the bucket. Watch the infant's reaction to the dropped block and recognize his/her response. Example: "You watched me drop my block into the bucket. You are looking in the bucket! Did you hear the 'plop' sound?" Once the infant has had time to respond, point to the blocks next to the infant and invite him/her to place a block into the bucket. Example: "Would you like to put a block in the bucket? It is your turn to drop a block in!" If the infant does not put a block in, demonstrate again how to drop a block into the bucket. Describe your actions and show enthusiasm as the block drops in. Encourage the infant to do the same.

Continue the activity by encouraging the infant to take turns placing the blocks into the bucket. Use strategies, such as the following, to promote back-and-forth interactions with the infant during the activity:

Describe what is happening. Examples: "You smiled when my block dropped into the bucket. I think you like watching the blocks drop into the bucket!" "We are taking turns putting blocks in the bucket! I put a block in. Then you put a block in. We are putting our blocks in the bucket."

- Recognize and respond to each of the infant's reactions. Example: "You clapped your hands when your block dropped in the bucket! Clap, clap, Maria! You put your block in the bucket!"
- If the infant prefers to watch you with the blocks, invite him/her to participate in the process. Examples: "You are watching me. Would you like me to put another block in the bucket? Which block should I use? This block or this block?" "Here is a block. Should I drop it in the bucket now? Listen for the sound!"

Remember to pause for the infant to respond to your words and to the activity itself. Leave spaces in your back-and-forth interaction for the infant to start or contribute to the exchange. Focus on interactions with the infant, rather than getting all the blocks in the bucket or having a perfect turn-taking pattern.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant participates in back-and-forth interactions with a caregiver during play with a ball.

Key Concepts
Ball

Materials Needed
Soft, medium-size ball

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

Invite an infant to sit across from you on the floor to play with a ball. Stretch your legs out toward the infant to create a border for the ball. Engage the infant by talking and showing him/her the ball. Roll the ball gently toward the infant. Encourage the infant to roll the ball back to you. Example: "I roll the ball to you, Matthew. You roll it back to me!" If the infant is not able to roll the ball, move closer and provide additional assistance to help him/her touch and move the ball. Show enthusiasm each time the ball reaches the infant and he/she rolls the ball back to you. Continue to encourage the infant to participate in the simple back-and-forth game. Some infants may want to play with the ball for several minutes, others for a shorter time. Describe the infant's participation in the interaction. Remember that back-and-forth interaction with the infant is more important than back-and-forth action with the ball.

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of these options encourage responsive interactions with infants that can strengthen both social and emotional connections between you and the infant. Allow the infant's reactions to lead the activity. Be flexible about how you approach each option while attempting to engage the infant in a turn-taking exchange. Example: If an infant is not interested in placing the blocks in the bucket, suggest a related activity with the blocks. (See Extra Support tip below.) Pay attention to the infant's level of excitement about the activity and adjust your response. (See Extra Support tip below.) Watch for signals that suggest the infant wishes to continue interacting. If the infant looks away, fusses, or turns his/her body away from you, shift the activity to allow a break from the interaction. Affirm the infant's efforts to engage in back-and-forth interactions.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ As you interact with the infant, remember to pause frequently for the infant to respond. Strive to interact with the infant in a back-and-forth manner, rather than the infant simply watching you. ■ Pay attention to the infant's level of excitement during the activity and adjust your response. Examples: If an infant seems excited about the activity, you might say "Oh, wow, Tiana! You put two blocks in our bucket!" If an infant offers a quieter reaction to the activity, consider providing a calm and informative response, such as "You are having fun, Tiana. First you put one block in our bucket. Then you added one more block." ■ In Option 2, if an infant is uninterested in

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

placing the blocks in the bucket, suggest a related activity, such as taking turns placing the blocks side by side. ■ Provide time for infants to independently explore the play materials from this block at a time when they are not expected to engage in back-and-forth interactions.

Enrichment ■ In Option 2, invite the infant to select which block you will use during your turn. Example: "Now it is my turn! Which block should I put in the bucket next?" If the infant remains interested and engaged, provide more blocks and a container of a different shape, such as a pitcher. ■ If an infant is enjoying the activity of taking turns with the ball in Option 3, ask if he/she would like to invite a friend to play. Facilitate the ball activity between the two infants.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of blocks; several containers, such as a bucket, basket, or bowl

Provide opportunities for infants to play with blocks and containers. Infants may enjoy exploring the blocks individually, or practice filling and dumping the containers. Infants may enjoy watching their peers engage in the materials in similar ways. Describe the infants' actions with the blocks. Recognize facial expressions and repeat and extend any vocalizations while the infants play.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several soft balls

Provide balls for small groups of children to play with. You may wish to pair one or two older children with infants (who are sitting independently) and toddlers. Invite the small groups of children to place their feet far apart and meet each other to help keep the ball from leaving the area. Young infants can participate while sitting in your lap during the activity. Give each group a ball to practice rolling back and forth. Talk with children about their actions and efforts to take turns rolling the ball.

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BLOCK 2

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An infant practices reaching for a toy while lying on his/her back or tummy.

Key Concepts
Reach
Touch
Hold

Materials Needed
Stacking rings (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Stacking rings are used as separate toys in this activity, not as items to stack.

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor facing an infant who is on his/her back or tummy. Place the infant on his/her back if the infant is not able to push up with his/her arms and hold up his/her head/neck. Comment on the colorful ring when you present it to the infant as follows:*

- *If the infant is on his/her back: Hold a ring near the center of infant's chest within easy reach of the infant and within the infant's line of vision. Do not place the ring in his/her hand without first providing a sustained opportunity for the infant to reach for the ring.*
- *If the infant is on his/her tummy: Place a ring on the floor directly in front and within reach of the infant.*]

ACT: [*Encourage the infant to reach toward the ring with either hand. Move the ring slightly if the infant does not look at the ring you offer.*

Invite the infant to play with the ring.

Describe the infant's actions. Examples: "You reached for the red ring." "You reached for the red ring and held it." "You moved the red ring to your mouth."]

ASK: Would you like to see another ring?

ACT: [*If the infant is on his/her back: Hold another ring near the center of the infant's chest so he/she can see it and reach it.*

If the infant is on his/her tummy: Place another ring directly in front and within reach of the infant.

Move the ring slightly if the infant does not look at the ring you offer.

Watch and enthusiastically describe the infant's reaction. Examples: "You are looking at the ring. Maybe you would like to touch the ring later." "You reached for the ring." "You are touching the ring." "You are touching the big ring with your fingers."]

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

EXPLAIN: [*Optional: If the infant manipulates the ring, even in a slight manner, pick up and show a different ring.*]

I am going to hold a ring, too. I am going to move my ring just like you move your ring.

[*Copy the infant's movements with the ring. Example: If the infant moves the ring, move your ring in response.*

Use a casual conversational tone to describe what the infant is doing with his/her ring. Examples: "You have a good grip on your ring." "Now you are putting the ring in your mouth." "You can move the ring by yourself."

Wait for the infant to react to your comments or actions with the ring. Acknowledge the infant's reactions. Example: "You smiled when I told you what you are doing with your ring!"

If the infant remains interested in the ring, continue the activity for about another minute by copying the infant's actions with his/her ring.]

RECAP: You are learning how to look at (or touch or hold) a toy!

[*Describe the infant's main actions in the activity. Examples: "You watched the ring I was holding for you." "You reached for the ring and touched it with your hand." "You reached for a ring and held it with your hand." "You put the ring in your mouth." "You let go of the ring and rolled over!"*]

What to Look For—Option 1

This activity builds on an infant's typically keen interest in looking at and touching objects. Age and development will determine the emerging skill most interesting to an individual infant. Pay close attention to the infant's abilities and preferences regarding each of the separate skills involved in the activity: reaching, touching, grasping, and maybe manipulating. An infant may be able to reach for and grasp a ring but prefer to simply hold it rather than manipulate it. Or an infant may hold the ring and bring it to his/her mouth. Some infants may let go of the ring soon after they grasp it. Other infants may not be able to voluntarily let go of the ring. Focus on the specific skill(s) that seems to be enjoyable to the infant and offer gentle encouragement for actions that may be challenging for the infant to do.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Use a smaller toy if the stacking ring is too big for the infant to hold. ■ Help the infant retrieve a ring that rolls out of his/her reach. ■ If the infant shows interest in touching the toy, but is not able to hold the toy, hold the toy near the baby's hands so he/she can touch and feel the toy. Describe the baby's exploration of the item.

Enrichment ■ For an infant who reaches for toys while on the floor and rolls over, place a toy to the side of the infant where he/she can see it. ■ Offer other small toys of different shapes. ■ An infant will enjoy holding items with different textures and shapes, such as a toy made of cloth. ■ Offer the infant a small item that makes a sound, such as a rattle or bell.

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BLOCK 2

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An infant practices reaching for and grasping a toy while sitting.

Key Concepts
Reach
Hold
Let go

Materials Needed
2–3 stacking rings (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Select rings of different colors. Stacking rings are used as separate toys in this activity, not as items to stack.

Invite an infant who can sit with support or sit independently to explore several colored rings with you. Describe the rings as you arrange them on the floor where the infant can see them. Hold out a ring near the center of the infant's chest to encourage the infant to use one hand to reach to his/her midline. Encourage the infant to hold the ring with either hand. Watch and describe the infant's movements. Examples: "You are holding a colorful ring!" "You held the ring, and then you let go of the ring. The ring fell to the floor."

Copy the infant's movements. Example: If the infant shakes the ring, shake your ring in response. In a casual conversational tone, describe how the infant handles the ring. Example: "You have a good grip on your ring. You were shaking the ring and now you are putting the ring in your mouth. You can move the ring by yourself." Pause for the infant to react. Enthusiastically respond to all vocalizations and non-verbal responses.

Offer the infant a second ring. Patiently hold the ring close to the infant so he/she may grasp it. The infant may need a few seconds to reach for the ring you offer. The infant may take the ring with his/her other hand. The infant may let go of the first ring to get the second ring. Pause for and describe the infant's reaction. Examples (which include opportunities to point to a ring and/or hand you describe):

- "You had a red ring in one hand. You saw the (second) yellow ring. You used your other hand to reach for the yellow ring. Now you have two rings. One ring in this hand. One ring in the other hand."
- "First you held the red ring. You moved your hand toward the yellow ring and opened your fingers. The red ring dropped. You used the same hand to grasp our yellow ring. The red ring is on the floor and now you are holding the yellow ring!"

Ask the infant "Would you share a ring with me?" Hold out your hand to receive a ring. If the infant holds on to the ring, simply say "I would like to hold the ring." If the infant releases a ring to you, describe the infant's action.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

Example: "You let go of a ring. You are sharing a ring with me." If the infant remains interested, continue offering and receiving a ring for several more minutes.

What to Look For—Option 2

The activity does not involve a particular pattern or sequence. What's important is to offer supportive opportunities for an infant to reach, grasp, hold, and maybe manipulate. The activity includes an opportunity for you to copy the infant's movements with a ring. The intent is to draw the infant's attention to his/her manipulation of the ring. Be careful to not allow this segment of the activity to shift into a pattern of do what I do, with you offering actions you'd like the infant to copy.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Pick up a dropped ring and offer to the infant again. Describe what is happening while offering the ring. "The red ring fell to the floor. I am holding it for you to take. Would you like to hold the ring again?" ■ Offer the rings in various places in relation to the infant's body, such as closer to a hand or lower than the chest. Describe your actions and offer encouraging statements. "I am holding the ring close to your hand. You can move your hand closer to my hand. You can hold the ring."

Enrichment ■ Offer various-sized rings for the infant to hold. ■ Play a simple game of give and take. Example: Offer a ring. Infant takes the ring. Ask for the ring back. Infant gives ring. Offer the ring again.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal

Fine motor development

An infant practices reaching for, grasping, and holding toys of different shapes while sitting.

Key Concepts

Hold

Materials Needed

Cylinder-shaped toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes

Cognitive

Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Toy possibilities include *Slide and Click* or *Big Sensory Squigz*.

This option is designed for infants who sit independently and can also crawl or walk. Sit on the floor facing an infant and offer a cylinder-shaped toy. Hold the toy near the center of the infant's chest to encourage a reach toward the middle of the infant's body. The infant may hold the shape using either hand. Describe the infant's actions and respond to his/her vocalizations. Offer a toy with a different shape. Watch and describe how the infant adjusts his/her grasp of the new shape. Examples: "You moved your fingers so you could hold the toy better." "You are trying different ways to hold the toy."

What to Look For—Option 3

At this age, exploring play materials with the mouth is an important way to learn. You may see an infant attempt to put a novel toy into his/her mouth, even if it is too large. Infants often bang toys on a surface. If the toy is dropped, encourage the infant to get the toy. Observe as the infant adjusts his/her position to reach for the toy.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Suggest the infant use two hands to grasp and/or hold a toy. You may wish to demonstrate use of two hands. Describe how the infant is using each hand to grasp or hold the toy.

Enrichment ■ Offer toys of various shapes (cube and cylinder) for the infant to hold. Describe the way the infant holds each shape. Example: "You are holding the cube with two hands." ■ Encourage the infant to place the toy in your hand. Give the infant a toy in exchange. ■ Offer two toys at the same time and describe the infant's reactions.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: small soft toys, small pail

Position the infant on the floor on his/her tummy. Arrange 3–4 small toys on a mat for the infant to reach. Sit next to the infant and encourage exploration of the toys. Carefully monitor the infant and never leave the infant unattended.

Early mobile infants enjoy removing small toys from a small pail. Place a pail with easy-to-grasp toys in a location where crawling infants will discover them on their own.

Place several toys on a low table for standing and walking babies to discover. Soft toys that are easy to grasp are suggested. Infants who walk may enjoy carrying items from place to place.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: small gift bag or pillowcase or lunch bags; small toys, such as little blocks and balls, small tongs; little objects, such as counters; cloth bag or box with a hole

Below are suggestions for engaging toddlers and older children in grasping and releasing different objects while infants work with you on reaching, grasping, and/or holding.

Find a small gift bag. Place two types of small toys on a low table, such as little blocks and small balls. Ask the toddlers to hold one little block and one ball. Encourage the toddlers to drop the toys into the bag. Give each toddler a turn to reach into the bag and grasp one of the toys. Toddlers will enjoy reaching in to grasp one ball and one block. An alternative to use of a bag is a pillowcase folded down at the top. Older children will enjoy having individual lunch bags to hold small objects. Encourage older children to identify an item by touch.

Toddlers may enjoy a game of dropping items into a container. Add challenge for older children by providing small tongs for grasping little objects, such as counters used in preschool-age activities.

Place several familiar toys into a cloth bag or a box with a hole. Toddlers will enjoy reaching into the box to recover a toy. Help a toddler name the toy after he/she can see it. Preschool-age children will enjoy placing their hand into the box and identifying an object by touch. Older children may help find a variety of small items to place in the bag or box.

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BLOCK 3 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Sounds

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes the sounds of familiar items shown in pictures.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about the sounds of items shown in the pictures.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book, and communicate about the sounds of items shown in the pictures.

Cognitive

Solving Problems

Option 1 (OO) A young infant considers how to explore one or two toys.

Option 2 (OO) An infant figures out how to take a toy out of a box.

Option 3 (OO) An infant joins a caregiver in finding and retrieving a "lost" toy.

Self-Regulation

Focusing and Remembering

Option 1 (OO) An infant practices watching a rattle as it is moved by a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An infant practices focusing on and remembering the location of a rattle as it is moved by a caregiver.

Option 3 (OO) An infant practices focusing on and remembering the location of a rattle hidden by a caregiver.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver, focused on pictures of baby faces.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver, focused on imitations of facial expressions.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants participate in responsive interactions with a caregiver during a song that emphasizes facial expressions.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) An infant experiences a body position and caregiver encouragement that support rolling over.

Option 2 (OO) An infant experiences a body position and caregiver encouragement that support crawling.

Option 3 (OO) An infant participates in open-ended play with a caregiver that supports moving into a sitting position.

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

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BLOCK 3

Exploring Sounds

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

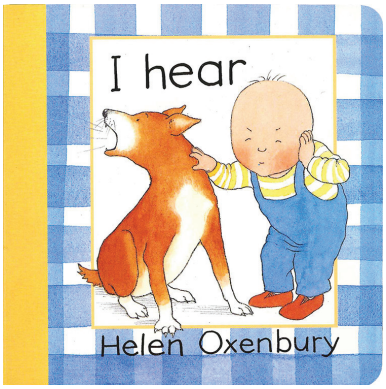
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes the sounds of familiar items shown in pictures.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Hear
Listen

Materials Needed
I Hear by Helen Oxenbury

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Be Prepared: Become familiar with the book to identify sounds associated with items shown in the illustrations.



BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*]

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

ASK: I have a book for us to read together! Look! Do you see the little boy and his dog?

[*Pause for and watch the infant's response. The young infant may show interest in the book by vocalizing, turning toward you, gazing at the picture, or reaching out and batting at the book. Describe the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the doggy, Eliana. I think the doggy is barking!"*]

EXPLAIN: The dog is barking. Look at the little boy. The boy hears the dog barking! Our book is about things we hear. I wonder what sounds we are going to hear in our book. Let's open the book and find out!

ACT: [*Open the book to the first page. Point to and make the sound of the bird. Example: "This is a bird. 'Tweet, tweet' says the bird!" Talk with the infant about the picture. Example: "Look at the little boy. The little boy is smiling. I think the little boy hears the bird! Did you hear the bird?"*

Continue to talk with the infant about the pictures in the book using strategies, such as the following:

- *Emphasize the sound associated with a picture. Example: "Look at the rain! The little boy is in the rain. He is holding an umbrella. The rain is falling on the umbrella. 'Plip-plop, plip-plop' goes the rain on the umbrella."*
- *Spend more time talking about a picture(s) that seems to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the baby. The baby has a sad face. The baby is crying! 'Boo-hoo' says the baby. Look at what is happening in this picture. The little boy is helping the baby! Now the baby is happy!"*

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

- *Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are kicking your legs and looking at the doggy. The dog is barking. 'Woof, woof,' says the dog! Do you hear the doggy? 'Woof, woof!'"*

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book about the sounds different things make. You looked at the pictures. You listened to the sounds. You smiled and kicked your legs when I made the barking sound of the dog! This was a fun book to read together!"*]

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

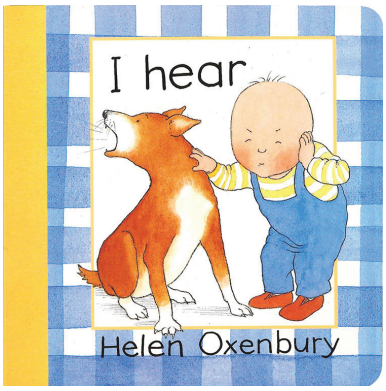
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about the sounds of items shown in the pictures.

Key Concepts
Book
Hear
Listen

Materials Needed
I Hear by Helen Oxenbury

Also Promotes
Cognitive



Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "Do you see the little boy with his dog? The dog is barking! The little boy is listening to the dog bark. Our book is about things we hear. We can listen to the sounds of things shown in our book. I wonder what we are going to hear!"

Encourage the infant to turn the book pages with you. Use book sharing strategies, such as the following:

- Point to and describe the pictures, emphasizing sounds associated with the pictures. Example: "This is a yellow bird. Do you see the bird's mouth? The bird is singing! 'Tweet, tweet,' sings the bird! The little boy is smiling. I think he likes listening to the bird."
- Pause and talk about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. You may wish to provide additional context or information. Example: "The little boy is sitting with his grandfather. Look! The little boy is listening to his grandfather's watch! See the watch? 'Tick, tock,' says the watch."
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You said, 'baby.' Yes, this is a baby! The baby is crying. 'Boo-hoo,' says the baby."
- Help the infant connect book information to their own experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "This is a telephone. This telephone looks different from the telephone we have in our room! The little boy is holding the telephone. We can talk and listen on the phone. 'Ring-ring! Hello?'"
- Exaggerate the sounds and say them with enthusiasm. Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book reading.
- Follow the infant's cues as you read the book. Turn the pages as slowly or as quickly as the infant seems to prefer.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Daniel. You listened to the different sounds. You said 'baby' when you looked at the picture of the baby crying. You smiled at the sound of the telephone ringing! I think you liked this book!"

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

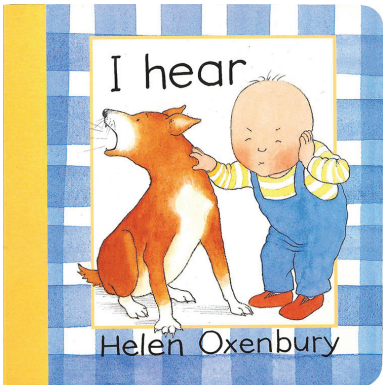
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book, and communicate about the sounds of items shown in the pictures.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Hear
Listen

Materials Needed
I Hear by Helen Oxenbury

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or prefer to stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to hold the book and turn the pages. You may wish to keep all of the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look, do you see the little boy with his dog? The dog is barking! The little boy is covering his ear. I think the barking is too loud for him! Our book is about things we can hear. You can listen to the sounds in our book. I wonder what we are going to hear! Would you like to help me turn the page and see?" The infant may help you turn the page or turn the pages independently. Use strategies, such as the following, to share the book with the infant:

- Point to and describe the pictures, emphasizing the sound associated with the picture. Example: "This is a rain cloud. See the rain falling? The little boy has an umbrella to keep him dry! The rain is falling on the umbrella. 'Plip-plop, plip-plop' goes the rain."
- Encourage the infant to repeat and say some of the sounds with you. Show enjoyment and enthusiasm as you say the sounds in the book.
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you label. Example: "Look at the little boy in his yellow raincoat. Do you see the little boy? Show me where the little boy is!"
- Describe what the infant is looking at and provide additional information. Example: "You are looking at the baby. The baby has a sad face. The baby is crying! 'Boo-hoo,' cries the baby! I wonder why the baby is crying. Look at the little boy. What do you think is going to happen next?"
- Describe and respond to the infant's gestures or vocalizations, especially those related to sounds depicted in the book. Examples: "You are pointing to the doggy. You said 'woof!' You know that dogs say 'woof.' 'Woof, woof,' says the dog!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "The little boy is listening to his grandfather's watch. See the watch? 'Tick-tock, tick-tock' goes the watch. Look! I have a watch too! Let's listen close. Can you hear it?"

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

- Follow the infant's cues as to how quickly or slowly to turn the pages. Some infants may turn pages forward and backward, and others may want to return to a favorite page several times.
- Conclude the session by recognizing the infant's participation, including sounds made and efforts to manage the book. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Adalyn. You pointed to the little boy in the yellow raincoat. You said 'woof' when you looked at the picture of the dog. You turned the pages to see what was next. We had fun reading this book together!"

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Infants enjoy looking at pictures of familiar things, including items that make a sound. Actively encourage older infants to make the sound associated with a picture, and enthusiastically acknowledge any young infant vocalizations that appear to be related to your description of the picture and its sound. Young infants often express interest in book pictures by cooing or babbling. An infant also may show interest in a picture by gazing, pointing, touching, or using his/her hands to bat at or tap the pictures. Repeat any sounds the infant appears excited about.

Watch the infant's response to the book introduction, especially in Option 1. An infant may show he/she is ready to read the book by gazing at the cover picture, vocalizing, and/or reaching toward the book. Some infants may grasp the book.

In Options 2 and 3, some infants may be eager to turn the pages and spend little or no time looking at the pictures. One way to deal with this interest is to support one or two rounds of mostly turning pages, and then engaging the infant in turning the pages more slowly so pictures can be looked at and talked about. It may be helpful to acknowledge the infant's page-turning interest and the purpose of sharing a book. Example: "It is fun to turn pages of a book. We also want to have fun looking at the pictures in our book. We turn the pages so we can see the pictures."

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Provide further description of pictured items that may be unfamiliar to the infant. Example: "This is a picture of a telephone. The boy is talking on a phone. We have a telephone in our room. The phone rings and I answer it so I can talk to other people!" ■ If the infant's interest in the book seems to be short, gently say the name and the sound of the item pictured on selected pages.

Enrichment ■ With an older infant, make the sound of the pictured item and invite the child to point to the item. Example: "Tweet, tweet!" "What is saying 'tweet, tweet' in this picture? Can you point to it? Yes, the birdy is saying 'tweet, tweet!'"

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BLOCK 3

Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several books with pictures and sounds of familiar objects and animals, such as *I Hear* by Helen Oxenbury

Provide the books for the infants to explore during floor time. Look at the pictures with the infants and say each of the sounds on the pages the infants turn to. Encourage older infants to imitate some of the familiar sounds, such as a dog barking, or speaking "hello" into a telephone.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *I Hear* by Helen Oxenbury; several familiar items that make sounds, such as a bell, keys, music shaker, or rainstick; basket to hold items

Share the book *I Hear* with children. As you read, invite toddlers and older children to name the items and to imitate the sounds that they make. Infants may enjoy holding a related item from the book, such as a toy dog or toy phone. After the book sharing, invite children to explore the items in the basket and talk about the sounds they make.

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BLOCK 3

Solving Problems

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

A young infant considers how to explore one or two toys.

Key Concepts
See

Reach

Materials Needed
2 small animal toys

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Optional Reading
My Colors Mis Colores by Rebecca Emberley

BEGIN: [*Lay a non-mobile infant on his/her tummy on the floor for a few minutes of tummy time. Sit on the floor close to the infant so he/she can see and hear you.*]

EXPLAIN: [*Use the infant's name as you tell him/her about the two smiling toys. Place the toys where the infant can easily see both little animal figures.*]

ASK: Do you see our toys?

[*Point to each toy.*]

Here is the turtle and here is the hedgehog.

ACT: [*For an infant who is learning to control his/her head, encourage looking at the animals. For an infant who can roll over, place the toys in front of the infant where he/she can reach them.*

- *Gently jiggle the toys so the infant can detect motion. Talk to the infant about each of the toys. Example: "Riley, here is the little hedgehog. Our hedgehog has a bumpy back."*
- *Describe the infant's actions. Examples: "Sammy, you are looking very carefully at our toys. I think you are looking at both toys." "You are reaching for the little turtle, Andrea. I think you want to touch the turtle."*
- *If the infant shows signs of frustration, move one or both of the toys closer to his/her hand. If the infant is fussy, pick him/her up, hold the infant securely in your arms, and give him/her one of the toys to explore.*]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe the infant's actions. Examples: "You held your head up to see the smiling animals." Or, "You saw the smiling animals and reached forward to get a hold of the turtle."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

The very young infant's challenge in this activity is to figure out how to explore one or both toys. For a very young infant, looking at a toy will occur before moving toward the toy. Looking is a valuable form of exploration. For an infant who is learning to control his/her head, lifting the head and looking at one or both toys are appropriate ways to address the challenge. These actions

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

represent forward movement in both cognitive and motor development. The act of looking occurs before an infant will try to reach for a toy.

The decision to look at or reach for one or both toys is another problem for an infant to consider in this activity. It is not important for the infant to touch or explore both toys. Some infants may get one toy and explore it with his/her hands and maybe mouth. Some infants initially may want to reach for both toys and then figure out that he/she can pursue one toy at a time. As indicated in the activity description, move a toy(s) closer to an infant who communicates frustration. Verbally acknowledge his/her frustration as you move the toy(s).

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Position the infant's arms for good support. Gently move his/her hands and forearms against the floor.

Enrichment ■ Draw attention to the smooth flat turtle and the bumpy hedgehog.

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BLOCK 3

Solving Problems *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

An infant figures out how to take a toy out of a box.

Key Concepts
In

Out

Materials Needed
2 small toy animals

2 small boxes or containers

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Baby Animals by Roger Priddy

Invite an infant to play a game using two toy animals and two small boxes. Sit on the floor facing an infant and place the toys between you. Point to and describe the little animal toys. Tell the infant the animals want to go into their houses.

While the infant is watching, place one animal into each little box. Talk about each animal going into the house as you place each one. Example: "Our little turtle is going in his house. Bye-bye, turtle." Encourage the infant to peek into the box.

Ask the infant if he/she can get the turtle out of the box. Pause for the infant to consider how this problem might be pursued. Offer suggestions if it appears the infant is uncertain about how to consider your request. Describe or demonstrate reaching into the box or turning the box upside down to shake out the toy. Offer a demonstration with one box only so the infant has the opportunity to try your approach with the second box.

Respond with happy surprise if/when the infant takes the animal out of the box! Next, ask if the infant can get the other toy out of its box (house). Acknowledge the infant's efforts in getting the toy out of the box. Emphasize the words in and out.

What to Look For—Option 2

Pay close attention to whether the infant seems to comprehend your verbal request to take the toy animal out of the box. Retrieving the toys is likely to be an infant goal independent of your request because the whereabouts of the toy animals will be of interest. Understanding that an object (or person) exists even when we cannot see the object (or person) is an important cognitive milestone, technically known as object permanence. Use short sentences for your request to get the toy out of the box and emphasize the word "out." If you offer a demonstration, be sure to offer the second toy/box as a turn for the infant to implement a solution to the problem of how to get the toy.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

If the infant is uninterested in the little animals, select toys that are more appealing to him/her, such as little vehicles or cloth toys. Encourage the infant to reach into the box or turn the box upside down to shake the toy out.

Some infants may enjoy added challenge of a two-step process to get the toy, as suggested in the Enrichment tip.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Place the toy in the box so a part of it extends outside the box. ■ Use a larger toy, such as a texture bear that is very easy to grasp. ■ Offer repeated opportunities for the infant to take a toy out of a box if action is of interest to the infant.

Enrichment ■ An infant may want to try two different ways to retrieve the toy animal from the box—reaching into the box, and turning over the box. ■ Offer a two-step process to get the toy out of a box by using a small box with an easy-to-open lid, or covering the box with a bandana or washcloth after you place the toy inside.

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BLOCK 3

Solving Problems *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

An infant joins a caregiver in finding and retrieving a "lost" toy.

Key Concepts
Find

Look

Materials Needed
Infant climbing form

2 small toys

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Social-Emotional

Optional Reading
Who: Peek-a-Flap Board Book by Jaye Garnett

Where's Spot by Eric Hill

When the infant is not looking, place one small animal toy on the step of a foam-covered infant climbing form that is surrounded by play mats. Invite a mobile infant to help you find the toy. Example: "I want to show you a neat toy turtle. But I do not know where it is. Let's find our lost turtle." Sit on the floor close to the infant climbing form. Describe the places you are looking. Example: "Is turtle in the dolly bed?" (Look in doll bed.) "We looked in the doll bed. We did not see the turtle. Is turtle on our little climber?" If necessary, point to the location of the toy animal you placed on the step. Describe the infant's reaction to seeing the toy. Example: "You are smiling. You are happy we found the toy turtle!" Encourage the infant to retrieve the toy.

Some infants may crawl or walk to the toy and simply take it off the climbing form. Other infants may go up the first small step to get the toy turtle. Offer assistance if necessary. Some walking infants may need to hold your hand when carrying the toy. Share the infant's delight in finding and getting the toy.

What to Look For—Option 3

Pay attention to how the infant manages two different problems in this activity. The first is the search for the lost toy. Offer more or less support for looking for the toy based on the infant's approach to this task. The activity description's example of looking in the dolly bed is intended as a demonstration of how you and the infant can look for the toy. You can extend the search by asking the infant if there are other places we should look or suggesting other places to look. The second problem for the infant to address is how to retrieve the toy. The approach will differ by the infant's motor development skills. Offer assistance when needed. At about 11 months of age, many infants are skilled at crawling and pulling up to stand. Some infants may be walking. Even though the toy is small enough for the infant to grasp in one hand, stay close by to give physical support if needed. Notice that the activity's goal statement recommends a collaborative arrangement for the toy search.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Omit use of the small climber if you anticipate this may offer too much challenge or distraction for the infant. ■ Repeat the activity if the infant seems interested, initially using the same toy and placing the toy in the same place each time you play.

Enrichment ■ Place an attractive toy in a place that requires more advanced search strategies and toy retrieval efforts, such as in a tunnel.

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BLOCK 3

Solving Problems *(continued)*

Cognitive

Interest Area

Materials needed: colorful toys, soft toy, nesting cup, containers or cloth bags

Arrange colorful toys for non-mobile infants to see from various distances. Hold an infant on your lap with an interesting toy to explore.

For early mobile infants, arrange several familiar toys in a novel way to create interest in getting things. Example: put a small soft toy inside a nesting cup and place it in a spot for an infant to discover.

For mobile infants, place a few small toys inside containers or cloth bags to support problem-solving skills.

Family Child Care

In the course of one day, toddlers and preschool-age children will encounter problems they can solve with your help and guidance. Encourage toddlers to pull a paper towel out of a dispenser, or turn off the water faucet. Guide a toddler in how to pull a chair out from the table.

Help a preschool-age child arrange blocks or toys on a shelf so they all fit side by side. Provide small bags for crayons that zip or snap closed and assist preschool children in opening and closing the bags.

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BLOCK 3

Focusing and Remembering

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An infant practices watching a rattle as it is moved by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch
Remember
Find

Materials Needed
Blanket or mat
2 infant rattles
Small blanket, piece of fabric, or scarf

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her tummy on a comfortable blanket or mat in front of you. Sit on the floor very close to the infant so he/she can see your face and hear your voice. Smile and make eye contact with the infant.*]

EXPLAIN: I will put you on your tummy for a short time. You can see me. I will stay close to you.

ACT: [*Place the rattle in front of the infant.*]

ASK: Here is a rattle. Would you like to touch it?

ACT: [*Encourage the infant to touch and explore the rattle for a few moments. If the infant is reluctant to give up the rattle for the next portion of the activity, present the second rattle.*]

We are going to play a game of finding the rattle. I am going to move the rattle, and you can find it!

[*Place the rattle on top of the small blanket or piece of cloth in front of the infant.*]

Do you see the rattle? Where is it?

[*Watch the infant's response closely. Young infants may respond by gazing at the rattle. Acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the rattle. You found the rattle on top of the blanket!"*]

I am going to hide the rattle. Watch and see where I put the rattle!

[*This time, with deliberate movements in view of the infant, hide the rattle under the blanket with a portion of the rattle showing. Ensure the rattle is in reach of the infant and that a portion of the rattle is showing.*]

Our rattle is hiding! Where is the rattle now? Can you find it?

[*Show enthusiasm and excitement if the infant reaches for or gazes at the rattle. Example: "You are reaching for the rattle. The rattle was hiding. You found it under the blanket!"*

If the infant remains interested, repeat the above deliberate actions, remembering to keep a portion of the rattle in full view of the infant. Again, show enthusiasm and excitement if the infant reaches for the blanket or rattle.

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

Acknowledge the infant's efforts to find the rattle. Examples: "You remembered that I put the rattle under the blanket! You looked for the rattle. Now you are holding the rattle." "You are looking at the rattle. You found the rattle on the blanket!"

Some infants may be ready for a different position or activity after several minutes. Example: "I can see that you are fussing. Are you ready for a different kind of play? Let's find something else to do."]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you describe what happened. Example: "You watched me hide the rattle. You smiled when I took the blanket off the rattle! We found it! We had fun together."*]

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BLOCK 3

Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An infant practices focusing on and remembering the location of a rattle as it is moved by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch

Find

Materials Needed
2 rattles

Small blanket, piece of fabric, or scarf

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to play a game. Have the small blanket, piece of fabric, or scarf close at hand. Place the infant facing out, turned slightly and securely in your arms so he/she is able to make some eye contact with you. With your arms around the infant, introduce the rattle. Encourage the infant to hold and explore the rattle for a few moments. Explain that we are going to play a game of finding the rattle. If the infant prefers to continue holding the rattle, use the second one for the game.

Start by placing the rattle on top of the small blanket or cloth within reach of the infant. Example: "I moved the rattle. Do you see it? You can find the rattle!" Pause for the infant to respond. The infant may reach for or gaze at the rattle. Describe the infant's response. Example: "You are reaching for the rattle. You found the rattle on the blanket!"

Announce that you are going to hide the rattle. Encourage the infant to watch you move the rattle. With deliberate movements the infant can fully see, place the rattle under the blanket with a portion of the rattle showing. Invite the infant to find the rattle. Show excitement and enthusiasm if the infant reaches for or gazes at the rattle.

Hide the rattle once more with the infant watching, this time completely hidden under the blanket. Encourage the infant to find the hidden rattle. Younger infants will likely be unsure what happened to the rattle, whereas older infants may reach for the blanket and rattle. If the infant is unable to retrieve the rattle, lift the blanket with enthusiasm and show excitement about finding the rattle.

If the infant remains interested, you may wish to hide the rattle under the blanket one more time. Depending on the infant's response to the last hiding action, you may hide the rattle with a portion showing or hide it completely under the blanket.

Wrap up the activity when the infant begins to lose interest. Example: "I can see that you are done watching the rattle. Let's find another activity." Acknowledge the infant's focus during the activity. Example: "We had fun looking for the rattle, Martina. You watched me hide the rattle. We found the rattle under the blanket! Thank you for playing with me."

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An infant practices focusing on and remembering the location of a rattle hidden by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch
Remember
Find

Materials Needed
2 rattles
Small blanket, piece of fabric, or scarf

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant who can sit independently to play a game with you. Sit facing the infant with a smile and introduce the rattle. Encourage the infant to hold and explore the rattle. Explain that you are going to hide the rattle for the infant to find. Ask the infant if he/she is ready for you to hide the rattle. If the infant prefers to keep holding his/her rattle during the activity, introduce the second rattle for the hiding game.

Encourage the infant to watch your movements as you place the rattle underneath the small blanket or cloth. Leave a portion of the rattle in view. Invite the infant to find the rattle. Example: "You watched me hide the rattle. Do you remember where the rattle is hiding? You can find it!" The infant may reach for the rattle or show awareness of the rattle's location by gazing at the rattle. Show excitement and enthusiasm as the rattle is revealed.

Hide the rattle again, repeating the above steps. This time, hide the rattle completely under the blanket and out of view. Younger infants may be unsure what happened to the rattle, whereas older infants may reach to remove the blanket. If needed, lift the blanket for the infant, showing enthusiasm and excitement about finding the rattle.

If the infant remains interested, repeat the above steps. Depending on the infant's reactions to the previous hiding attempts in this activity, you may wish to leave a portion of the rattle showing or hide the rattle completely.

Transition out of the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest with finding the rattle. Acknowledge the infant's focus during the activity. Example: "You watched me hide the rattle. You remembered where the rattle was hiding. You found it! I had fun playing this game with you."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

These options support infants in learning to focus on an object and remember where the object is hidden. Infants who are beginning to understand that things still exist when they cannot be seen (technically known as object permanence) may easily find the hidden rattle and delight in lifting the blanket to reveal it. All infants should be recognized for efforts to watch the rattle as it is moved and hidden, including partially hidden. The focus (watch) element of the activity is key to the remember element. Younger infants cannot be expected to remember the location of a fully hidden object.

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Keeping a part of the rattle fully visible to younger infants is consistent with their phase of cognitive development and promotes a positive experience with the activity. Closely watch the infant's interest in the activity to determine how long to sustain the activity.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Watch to make sure a second rattle is helpful and not a distraction. You may wish to use one rattle only. But keep in mind that infants explore things with their mouths as well as their hands, and may like to mouth a second rattle while watching the whereabouts of the other rattle. ■ Provide auditory hints to the rattle's location. Gently touch the rattle under the blanket to make a sound.

Enrichment ■ Invite the infant to place the blanket over the rattle for you to find. ■ Hide the rattle under a different object, such as a basket or box.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: small toys, such as rattles

During floor time, invite one or several infants to watch you hide and then find a small toy under a blanket or basket. Leave a portion of the toy exposed for younger infants. Younger infants will benefit from watching their older peers find a completely hidden toy.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

Play hide and seek games with children. Older children may hide under a blanket or table. Younger children may prefer to hide behind an object, such as a chair. Infants and young toddlers may enjoy "finding" their peers with help. These games can also be played with familiar toys, such as a ball or large block. Hide the object and invite the children to find it. Alternate between partially and completely hiding the objects.

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BLOCK 3

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills
Awareness of emotions

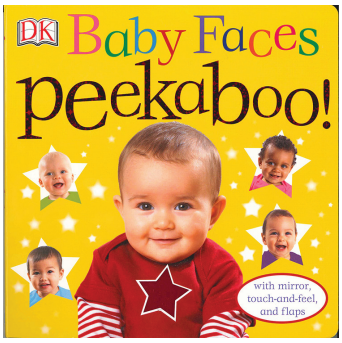
A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver, focused on pictures of baby faces.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Face

Materials Needed
Baby Faces Peekaboo! by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*



Smile and talk with the infant about his/her most recent activity. Example: "Hi, Daniel! You woke up and had your bottle. Would you like to read a book with me now?" Pause for the infant to respond to your attention. The infant may look at you intently, move his/her body, or vocalize. Respond to the infant's interest and imitate any vocalizations. Example: "You are looking at me and smiling, Olivia. I can hear you talking! You are saying 'ma-ma-ma-ma.' I think you are ready to read our book!"]

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

ASK: I have a book for us to read together! Look! Do you see the baby?

[*Pause for the infant's response. Imitate any facial expressions or vocalizations of the infant.*]

ACT: [*Begin looking at the pictures in the book with the infant. It is not necessary to read the text. Focus on the pictures of the babies and their facial expressions. Example: "Look at this baby! This baby is smiling. She is feeling happy."*

Continue to look at and describe the faces of the babies in the book. Comment on any verbal or non-verbal reactions the infant may have to a picture. Example: "You are looking closely and batting at the picture of this baby. The baby is making a silly face! I think you like this picture of the baby." Invite the infant to look in the mirror located at the end of the book. Talk with the infant about what he/she may see. Example: "You are smiling at the baby in the mirror! The baby in the mirror is you, Mariah! You are the smiling baby."]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of what happened during the activity. Example: "Today we looked at pictures of babies in our book. You looked at the picture of the silly baby for a long time, Rowan. You smiled at your reflection in the mirror at the end of the book! Thank you for sharing time with me."*]

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BLOCK 3

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver, focused on imitations of facial expressions.

Key Concepts
Face

Materials Needed
Large mirror

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Self-Regulation

Optional Reading
Baby Faces Peekaboo! by DK Publishing

Invite an infant to sit with you near a large mirror. Encourage the infant to look at you and make eye contact with you. Make an exaggerated facial expression, such as a silly face. (You may wish to copy some of the facial expressions from the Optional Reading book.) Invite the infant to imitate your facial expression. Example: "I am making a silly face! My tongue is out and my eyes are big! Now it's your turn! Can you make a silly face like I am?" Describe and imitate the infant's responding facial expressions and/or vocalizations.

After several moments, invite the infant to play the imitation game in the mirror. Sitting close to the infant, encourage him/her to notice the reflection in the mirror. Repeat the process of making an exaggerated facial expression and encouraging the infant to imitate you. Some infants may gaze at the reflections in the mirror, whereas others may prefer to look directly at you. Allow the infant's responses to lead the direction of the activity as well as determine how long to continue the interaction.

For some infants, this activity will primarily involve you imitating the infant's facial expressions. Some infants may enjoy imitating your expressions and enjoy a turn-taking approach to imitations. Emphasize the positive interactions between the two of you and affirm the infant's efforts to focus on your face during the activity.

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BLOCK 3

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills
Awareness of emotions
Older infants participate in responsive interactions with a caregiver during a song that emphasizes facial expressions.

Key Concepts
Smile

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Sit on the floor facing several older infants to share a song. Some infants may wish to sit close to you, whereas others may prefer to stand close by. Smile and talk with the infants as you introduce the song. Modify the familiar song, "If You're Happy and You Know It," to reflect several different facial expressions. Infants will likely delight in hearing this familiar song presented in a new way. Begin by making a large smile. You may use the following suggestions to modify the song:

If you're happy—make a smile
If you're sad—make a frown
If you're silly—stick out your tongue

Sing the song with enthusiasm and use exaggerated facial expressions. Make eye contact with each infant and encourage them to participate in ways of their choosing. Some infants will respond to your facial expressions and others may wave their arms or bounce their bodies to the song. Some infants may prefer to watch and listen. Acknowledge each infant's participation in the song activity.

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of these options encourages warm and responsive interactions with infants. The activities build on infants' natural interest in closely watching faces of others, including expressions of familiar adults. Responding to infants by making similar facial expressions and sounds in response to their actions will encourage infants' efforts to gain and hold the attention of others. Some infants will enjoy imitating your expressions as well, perhaps moving to a turn-taking approach to making and/or imitating facial expressions.

Maintaining eye contact may be uncomfortable for some infants, especially after a minute or two. Watch for signals, such as the infant looking away, fussing, or turning his/her body away from you. You may wish to shift the activity to provide a break in the interactions, or end the activity and try again at a later time. Emphasize positive interactions and affirm an infant's efforts to focus on your face during the activity.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Remember to pause frequently for an infant to respond. As much as possible, interact with the infant in a back-and-forth manner rather than the infant simply watching you talk or change facial expressions. ■ Reposition an infant slightly to give him/her an option of where to look if he/she begins to show signs of discomfort. ■ Watch each infant's reactions to the activities closely. Some infants may enjoy a livelier, more enthusiastic activity, whereas others may prefer calm, soothing interactions. ■ If the infant seems uninterested in face-to-face interaction in Option 2 or 3, you may read the book in Option 1 and offer Option 2 or 3 another day.

Enrichment ■ Mimic the faces of the babies pictured in Option 1. Example: "This baby is making a happy face! The baby is smiling, see? Now I am making a happy face. I am smiling like the baby in the picture!" ■ Invite the infant to play a game of *Peekaboo* while looking in the mirror during Option 2. ■ Infants who are familiar with imitating facial expressions (such as sticking out their tongue) may enjoy Option 2 each day for a week or less. ■ Introduce several other positive facial expressions, such as silly or sleepy.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Baby Faces Peekaboo!* by DK Publishing, large mirror, several sheer scarves

Provide opportunities for infants to explore their reflections alongside each other in a large mirror. Briefly share the book with the infants, engaging them in a game of *Peekaboo* with the pictured babies. After the book sharing, invite the infants to interact with the scarves in front of the mirror. Some infants may use the scarves to play *Peekaboo*. Some may have other ideas for the scarves. Many infants may not recognize their own reflections in the mirror, but will enjoy looking at all the baby faces reflected back at them!

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several books with photos of babies making different facial expressions, such as *Baby Faces Peekaboo!* by DK Publishing, several age-appropriate handheld mirrors, basket or display shelf for the books

Place the books and mirrors in a comfortable area. Invite several toddlers and children at a time to explore the faces in the books and to examine their own reflections in the mirrors. Encourage children to experiment with making different faces in the mirrors. Help infants look into a mirror. Describe facial expressions you observe. Infants and young toddlers will enjoy watching the facial expressions of their older peers.

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BLOCK 3

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An infant experiences a body position and caregiver encouragement that support rolling over.

Key Concepts
Lift

Roll over

Materials Needed
Several infant-sized toys

Also Promotes
Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: This brief activity is for an infant who can lift his/her head and sit with support (generally about 3–4 months of age). Offer the activity to an infant who is content and alert.

BEGIN: [Place the infant on a flat firm surface on his/her tummy. Sit on the floor to one side of the infant so he/she can easily see your face. Engage the infant with your smile. Talk with the infant, leaving little pauses for him/her to react.

Position your face in a way that encourages the infant to use his/her arms for support in lifting his/her head and then shoulders to see you and/or to interact. The pleasure of the interactions may be exciting to the infant and cause him/her to move parts of his/her body.]

ACT: [*Continue talking with the infant and making pleasing sounds when the infant moves. Example: "Mateo, ooh. Hi friend. You are lifting yourself up. Ooh! Are you doing teeny push-ups?"*

The infant may be more interested in lifting up his/her head and shoulders if you introduce a colorful toy or ring a little bell rattle. Present the toy where the infant can easily see it.

Describe what the infant is doing. Example: "You are lifting your head and shoulders and looking around. Your legs, arms, back, and tummy muscles get stronger when you move around. Every day you get stronger. Someday you will roll over!"

The infant may surprise himself/herself by flipping over. The infant may use his/her legs and arms to increase motion for rolling from tummy to side.

Be aware of fussing that shows the infant is working hard to achieve his/her goal. Encourage the infant to persist for a moment or two before helping. Give verbal encouragement. Example: "You are really working hard to roll over!"

Watch for signs of fatigue. Fussing or looking away can also indicate a change in activity is needed. Hold or carry infants who need a change of pace.

This activity may span 1–2 minutes for some infants, longer for others.]

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

RECAP: [*Describe the infant's actions, especially body movements. Example: "You held yourself up on your arms."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

An infant generally learns to flip over after developing the ability to hold his/her head and sit with support. Some infants are thrilled about rolling, while others may not prefer it. Many infants first roll from tummy to back and later develop a back to tummy roll. While development normally follows a pattern, each infant has an individual approach.

At about five months some infants push their chest off the floor and kick their legs. These movements strengthen an infant's torso muscles, which are needed to complete a roll.

You may also see an infant push up onto his/her hands and shift weight more to one side, causing him/her to roll over onto the back. Rolling takes practice. It may take a while for an infant to duplicate an accidental roll, or to learn to move his/her arm out of the way on the way over.

Your role in this activity is to offer encouragement, which includes appropriate excitement in your voice and actions (perhaps with a toy) that encourage the infant to hold up his/her head and shoulders.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Gentle assistance may be offered occasionally. If an infant is trying repeatedly to roll over and needs a little bit of support, you may position one arm at his/her side or lift it over his/her head to allow the infant to roll all the way over.

Enrichment ■ Sit on the floor in an open space with an infant who has learned to roll and place several novel toys on either side and encourage the infant to roll toward a toy. ■ Place a non-breakable mirror near the infant to encourage rolling.

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BLOCK 3

Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An infant experiences a body position and caregiver encouragement that support crawling.

Key Concepts
Crawl

Materials Needed
1 soft toy

Also Promotes
Self-Regulation
Social-Emotional

Optional Reading
Move by Elizabeth Verdick and Marjorie Lisovskis

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can roll his/her body. Select a floor surface that you anticipate will best support the infant. Some infants move forward on a carpet with greater ease than on a hard surface. Select a soft toy that will appeal to the infant.

Sit on the floor close to an infant who has become accustomed to rolling. Observe and describe his/her motions. Some infants prefer to roll from place to place for several weeks, whereas other infants are working on getting into a crawling position, with weight balanced between hands and knees.

Stay close to the infant and encourage his/her motions. Position yourself for optimal interaction with the infant, especially so the infant can easily see your face and a toy you offer.

Sometimes an infant gets into a crawling position and rocks himself/herself without moving forward. Your smiles and positive descriptions of what you see can provide helpful encouragement. Example: "Alicia, you are up on your hands and knees. Rocking, rocking back and forth. I think you are getting ready to crawl!"

Encourage the infant to shift weight to one hand and reach with the opposite hand. Place a soft, attractive toy near the infant, so he/she can reach out to touch it with one hand. If the infant feels ready, he/she may reach toward the toy.

Infants often find it entertaining if a familiar adult crawls along on the floor close by. A gentle and lighthearted game of chase on hands and knees will delight some infants. Encourage an infant to crawl after you.

What to Look For—Option 2

You will see many differences in the ways infants begin to move from place to place. For some infants, rolling is a way to move from place to place. There is no need to actively encourage getting up on hands and knees. Many infants progress from creeping with their tummy on the floor to crawling on hands and knees. Every infant has an approach to early locomotion.

An infant may crawl close to a wall and be unsure about how to turn around. Sit close to the infant and assist with problem-solving by reassuring the infant and showing him/her how to turn around.

The surface on which the infant is placed is important, as noted in Be Prepared. Outdoors, encourage an infant to move forward on hands and knees in a sandy area. For some infants, the feel of grass on their hands and feet is uncomfortable until they become familiar with the texture.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Move closer to the infant to let him/her know you are there for support. Speak softly and encouragingly to the infant. ■ Slide the toy a little closer to the infant. Use a cheerful voice to encourage the infant to reach. Use words that speak to the infant's determination. Example: "Leroy, you are trying so hard to reach that toy."

Enrichment ■ Pretend to be a pet crawling on all fours. ■ Roll a ball on the floor and encourage a crawling infant to follow it. ■ Place an interesting toy several feet from the infant and encourage him/her to crawl or creep toward it.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An infant participates in open-ended play with a caregiver that supports moving into a sitting position.

Key Concepts
Sit

Materials Needed
Soft toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Self-Regulation
Cognitive

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who are kneeling and beginning to stand. Select soft toys that are easy for the infant to grasp, such as people figures. The caregiver actions recommended below may occur as part of playtime with several infants.

Place play materials at different levels within the infant's reach. Provide an enjoyable activity, such as playing with people figures on a low surface. An infant who is adept at crawling will discover play materials on low surfaces. Foster movement by providing space for infants to crawl and a variety of interesting toys.

Crawling and changing positions are complicated movements that take practice. Offer encouragement for an infant's efforts to sit, including specific movements. Moving from a creeping position to sitting requires an infant to lean forward, and shift weight to hands. Weight from the knees then shifts to the infant's buttocks.

Draw attention to the infant's use of two hands to manipulate a toy(s). Infants enjoy using two hands to examine toys from the sitting position.

Enthusiastically acknowledge the infant's efforts! Example: "Stella, you crawled over to the toy. Now you are sitting down to hold it. You did something new today!"

What to Look For—Option 3

Curiosity about the environment and a desire to interact are both motivating factors for infants on the go. Observe and positively comment on the infant's movements as you would an athlete in a favorite sport.

Often after attempting a new skill an infant will look toward or go to a nurturing caregiver for support and encouragement. Motor skills are physical in nature, but they occur within social-emotional relationships the infant has with caregivers.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ For an infant who is new to standing, sit close for extra support. ■ If the infant begins to lose balance, reposition his/her feet for a stance that increases balance. ■ Encourage an infant to bend his/her knees and sit back down if he/she becomes unsteady.

Enrichment ■ Place a few musical instruments on a low shelf for the infant to find. Encourage the infant to play with a musical instrument while kneeling or standing. This may prompt interest in sitting. Sing a silly song with the infant

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

as he/she plays the instrument. Example: "Alicia is ringing a bell, ringing a bell, ringing a bell, Alicia is ringing a bell on this happy morning" (Tune: "Mary Had a Little Lamb").

Interest Area

Materials Needed: infant gym with toys, cloth books, non-breakable containers, toys, small bags or pails, several cube chairs

Create a space for non-mobile infants to move freely. Arrange toys close to non-mobile infants. Also place one or two toys slightly out of reach to encourage movement, such as rolling. Hang a few toys from a simple infant gym to encourage infants to swipe at the hanging toys. Place cloth books where infants can reach them.

For crawling infants, place interesting play materials in non-breakable containers. Infants will enjoy taking toys out of containers. Crawling infants may also enjoy the feeling of moving on a tiled floor as well as carpeting. Place several toys on different surfaces.

If infants in your room are walking, offer items they can carry from place to place, such as small bags or pails. Put several cube chairs side by side. Infants will enjoy pulling to stand and moving around the supports.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: sling or baby pack, *Itsy Bitsy Yoga* by Helen Garabedian, *The Kids' Yoga Deck: 50 Poses and Games* by Annie Buckley

Children of all ages will enjoy moving in new ways. While infants are developing skills needed for crawling, younger infants will benefit from being held and carried in different positions. Depending upon an infant's age and strength, carry some infants facing out, away from you.

Itsy Bitsy Yoga and *The Kids' Yoga Deck: 50 Poses and Games* are useful resources for yoga activities that offer appropriate challenge for preschool-age and older children in body control.

A rainy day game for all ages can provide a movement challenge for older children. Invite children to sit in a large circle with space in the middle. Each older child can have a turn in the middle of the circle to show a favorite move, such as jumping, crawling, standing on one foot. Encourage children to be a good audience and clap for every child.

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BLOCK 4 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and talking about pictures of animals.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of animals.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book, and communicate about pictures of animals.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) A young infant looks at small toys as part of brief play with a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in guided play with opportunities to reach for and manipulate different toys.

Option 3 (IG) Infants strengthen their ability to look at different objects.

Self-Regulation

Paying Attention

Option 1 (OO) A young infant watches a caregiver make different kinds of facial expressions.

Option 2 (OO) An infant watches a caregiver make different kinds of facial expressions, including imitations of the infant's expressions.

Option 3 (OO) An infant participates with a caregiver in making different facial expressions, including the opportunity to imitate the caregiver's expressions.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver, focused on a toy rattle.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in open-ended play with a caregiver, focused on toy animal figures and a muffin pan.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver that include opportunities to move animal figures from one muffin pan to another.

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (OO) An infant watches a caregiver make sounds by shaking a toy, with the opportunity to hold and shake a sound-making toy.

Option 2 (OO) An infant shakes different types of sound-making toy(s) with caregiver guidance.

Option 3 (OO) An infant participates with a caregiver in shaking a sound-making toy with one or two hands.

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

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BLOCK 4

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and talking about pictures of animals.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

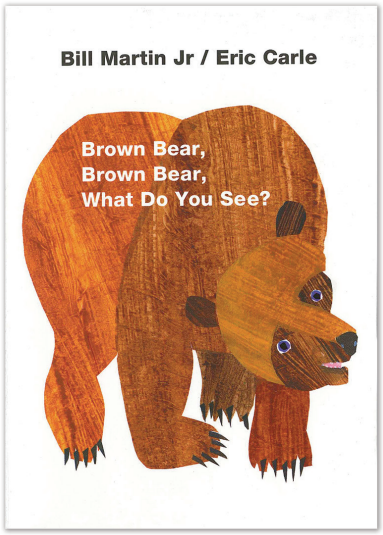
Materials Needed
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle

Also Promotes
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*]

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

ASK: I have a book for us to read together! Look! Do you see the big brown bear?



[*Point to the bear. Pause and watch for the infant's response. The infant may show interest in the book by vocalizing, turning toward you, gazing at the picture, or reaching out and batting at the book.*

Acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the brown bear, Hiba. I can hear you cooing!"]

EXPLAIN: This is a brown bear. The brown bear sees different animals in our book! Let's open the book and see what animal is on the next page!

ACT: [*Begin reading the rhythmic, rhyming text as you point to and describe pictures. Example: "Here is a red bird. The bird has a yellow beak. Look at the bird's red wings! I wonder what animal we are going to see next!" Use strategies, such as the following, to engage the infant with the book:*

- *Spend a little more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the black sheep. The sheep has a lot of black fluffy wool! Look! Where are the sheep's ears? Here they are!"*
- *Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are kicking your legs and looking at the children! I see the children's eyes and hair. (Point.) I wonder what the children are going to see next. Let's turn the page and see!"*

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

- *Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment. Infants may enjoy a slightly higher pitch and a slower tempo. You may wish to emphasize the rhythm of the rhyming text by reading in a sing-song voice.*

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book about different animals. We looked at pictures of animals. We pointed to the sheep's ears. You kicked your legs when we looked at the picture of all the children! This was a fun book to read together!"*]

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BLOCK 4

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

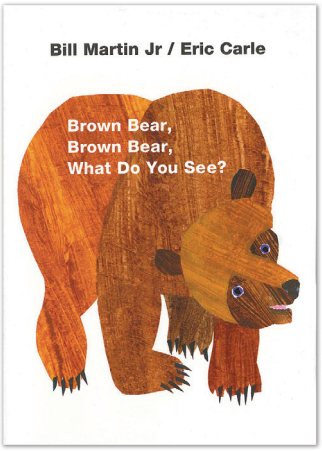
Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of animals.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "Look! Do you see the brown bear? Our book is about different animals. I wonder what animals we are going to see in our book!"

Encourage the infant to turn book pages with you. Share the book with strategies, such as the following:

- Point to and name objects pictured. Example: "This is a green frog. Here is the frog's pink tongue. Look at the frog's feet! These feet help the frog hop. What else do you see?"
- Describe what the infant is looking at. Example: (Point to each object as you speak.) "You are looking at the white dog. The white dog has a red collar. Do you see the dog's ears? Look! Here is the dog's pink tongue!"
- Pause and talk about the pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. You may wish to provide additional context or information. Example: "You are looking at the teacher. The teacher has brown hair. She is wearing glasses, just like I do! What do you think the teacher is going to see on the next page?"
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are pointing to the blue horse. This is a silly picture of a horse! Do you see the horse's blue tail? Where is the horse's mouth?"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "You are pointing to the purple cat. You have a cat that lives at your house! The cat in our picture has a long tail and a pink tongue. Does your cat have a long tail?"
- Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment. Infants may enjoy some of the repetitive text read in a sing-song voice. Emphasize the repeated phrases.
- Follow the infant's cues as you read the book. Turn the pages as slowly or as quickly as the infant seems to prefer without compromising the purpose of sharing a book. Watch for an infant's signal that may suggest it is time to stop the book reading.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, James. You looked at the pictures of different animals. You touched the picture of the blue horse. You smiled at the picture of all the children! I think you liked this book!"

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BLOCK 4

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

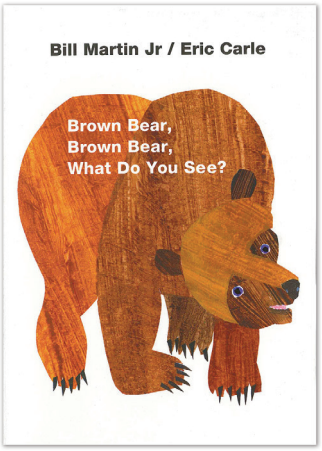
Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book, and communicate about pictures of animals.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or prefer to stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to hold the book and turn its pages. You may wish to keep all of the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look! Do you see the brown bear? The brown bear sees different animals in our book. Would you like to help me turn the page to read the book?" Some infants may help you turn the page, or turn the pages independently. Use strategies, such as the following, to share the book with the infant:

- Point to and label objects in the pictures. Example: "This is a blue horse. The blue horse has a long tail. Do you see the horse's ears and teeth? I wonder what the blue horse is going to see on the next page!"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you label. Example: "This is a yellow duck. The duck has orange feet. Do you see the duck's feet? You can point to the duck's orange feet!"
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Examples: "You said 'woof, woof!' You are looking at the picture of the dog. Dogs say 'woof, woof.' What do you think the dog is going to see next?"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "Look at all the children! The children are looking at the animals. Do you see the children's eyes? Where are your eyes?"
- Show enjoyment as you read the rhythmic, rhyming, repetitive text. Emphasize the repeated phrase "what do you see?"
- Follow the infant's cues as to how quickly or slowly to turn the pages. Some infants may turn pages forward and backward, and others may want to return to a favorite page several times.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped hold our book, Asia. You pointed to the purple horse. You said 'meow' when you looked at the picture of the cat! You turned the pages to see what was next. We had fun reading this book together!"

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of the three activity options encourages responsive and enjoyable book sharing experiences with infants. Many infants will connect with the colorful animals and repetitive, rhythmic text in this book. Infants will likely enjoy looking at the pictures of the colorful animals against the white background. Infants may show interest in the pictures by gazing, pointing, touching, or using his/her hands to bat at or tap the pictures. Infants may also express interest in the book by vocalizing, including cooing, babbling, and later saying a word or making a corresponding sound (such as a cat's 'meow'). Older infants may imitate your sounds and/or intonation as you read. Some may attempt to imitate the repeated phrase "What do you see?" Older infants may also express interest by pointing or turning the pages in the book to a particular picture. Encourage the infant to have an enjoyable experience with the book in his/her own way. Some book sharing activities may be long, others much shorter.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Help a young infant focus on your voice by softly singing the rhythmic text. ■ Provide an object or prop related to the book for the infant to hold during or after the book sharing.

Enrichment ■ Introduce the older infant to the color of each animal. Although infants are not expected to learn or remember color names, using color names while talking about pictures can promote early awareness of colors and color names.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several Eric Carle books with repetitive text, such as *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? Baby Bear, Baby Bear, What Do You See?* and *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?*

Books by Eric Carle appeal to infants with rich colors, repetitive text, and animals that are both familiar and new. Place the books in a comfortable area of the room during floor time. Ask infants which book they would like to read with you. Repeated experiences with similar text and illustrations support infants' language and literacy development.

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle; large piece of white paper affixed to a low table; crayons or markers in bright primary colors

This is a favorite book of children of all ages! Invite older toddlers and children to "read" the repeated words with you as you share the book. Show enthusiasm as you turn each page to reveal the next animal. After the book sharing, invite children to create a group art mural. Older children may use the bright colors to create animals from the book, or have their own ideas for drawing. Toddlers will enjoy experimenting making marks with the primary colors on the white paper. Infants may enjoy holding a colorful animal from the book during the activity.

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BLOCK 4

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

A young infant looks at small toys as part of brief play with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
See

Look

Materials Needed
2 different small toys

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Hold an infant on your lap in a sitting position, with the infant's back fully supported by leaning against you. Place one hand on the infant's chest to prevent him/her from tipping forward. Use your arm to support the infant's head, if needed.

Invite the infant to play by saying his/her name and talking with a happy and quiet voice. Example: "Let's look at a toy, Shawn. I think you will like this toy." Use the following sequence to help the infant explore a toy:

- Show the infant a toy. Hold it still, about 12 inches from his/her face. Describe the toy.
- Move the toy slightly. Describe what is happening to the toy.
- Touch the toy to the infant's hand. Some infants may grasp the toy.
- Describe the infant's reaction to the toy.

At this age, an infant may focus on a toy for a few seconds. Repeat the sequence with the second toy if the infant is calm and alert.

If the infant needs help calming, hold him/her while gently swaying side to side. Talk or hum quietly. Example: "Seeing the toy and hearing my voice were exciting for you. You looked away, so I put away the toy."

What to Look For—Option 1

Non-mobile infants are generally alert for short periods of time. There may be a few minutes to engage in a play activity after the infant has had food or bottle and feels comfortable. Another good time for brief play with some infants is upon waking. Introducing a toy-focused play activity is generally not helpful to an infant who is tired or fussy.

Watch the infant's visual attention to a toy. Remember that looking is a way to explore an object. A young infant typically will be able to clearly see an object that is about 12 inches away. Use a slow pace to allow the infant to see the shape and color of the toy. Most young infants will not be able to reach for or grasp a small object.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Incorporate the activity into a diapering routine. Lay the infant on the diaper table and hold one hand on his/her torso. Present toys one at a time. Describe the infant's reaction. Set the toys aside and proceed with the diaper routine.

Enrichment ■ Use a small toy that produces a sound, such as a wrist rattle.

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BLOCK 4

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant participates in guided play with opportunities to reach for and manipulate different toys.

Key Concepts
Hold
Look
Watch

Materials Needed
2 different small toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: The activity description uses a toy bear and a turtle as examples. Use two different toys that you anticipate will appeal to the infant. Use toys with different textures if you expect this will be of interest to the infant.

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor facing an infant who can sit alone. Begin the interaction by describing the infant's actions. Example: "Adrianna, you are looking at me with your big brown eyes. You are watching what I am doing."*]

ACT: [*Hold one toy within easy reach of the infant and within the infant's line of vision. Do not place the toy in the infant's hand without first providing a chance for the infant to reach for the toy.*]

Here is a soft little toy. Our toy is a bear.

[*Playfully describe the toy. Focus on aspects of the toy that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Examples: "The teddy bear has a big nose." "I think you are looking at the bear's ears. The bear has soft ears."*]

ASK: Would you like to hold our bear?

[*Encourage the infant to grasp the soft bear. Describe the infant's actions. Respond to the infant's vocalizations, leaving pauses for the infant to respond.*

If the infant does not take the bear, playfully tip it from side to side and pretend the bear is talking or singing. Move the toy close to the infant and ask again "Do you want to hold the bear?" Continue to describe the toy and the infant's actions. Examples: "The bear is soft." "You are pulling on his ear." "You are feeling the bear's nose."

If the infant is holding and/or manipulating the first toy, offer the second toy in the same manner you offered the first toy. Describe the toy with a playful voice. Example: "This is a turtle. The turtle has eyes." Move the turtle toy close to the infant and ask "Do you want to hold our turtle?" Pause for the infant to respond.

If the infant looks, but does not reach for the toy turtle, playfully tip it from side to side and pretend the turtle is talking. If the infant looks

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

away from the toy, put it down. Pause and observe to determine infant's interest. Follow the infant's cues about what to do next.

The infant may hold a toy in each hand. Point to and describe what the infant is doing. Example: "You are holding two toys. You have one soft bear in this hand and a turtle in your other hand."

Describe the feel of each toy. Emphasize bumpy turtle and soft bear.

If the infant drops one toy, pick it up and hold it so he/she can see the toy. If the infant wishes to reach out and grasp the toy again, encourage him/her to "get the toy." Put the toy aside if the infant shows no interest in it.

Continue the activity as long as the infant remains interested.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief summary of what the toys look like and what the infant did with each one. Example: "We played with a soft bear and a turtle. You held the bear's soft foot. You made a singing sound and shook the little turtle."*]

What to Look For—Option 2

Notice what the infant looks at during the activity and, as suggested in the activity plan, build your description of the toy(s) on what seems to be the focus of the infant's gaze. Keep in mind that the infant's eyes may be fixed mostly on you and your actions rather than on the toy. Although the goal of the activity is to help an infant strengthen his/her ability to focus on objects, there also are opportunities for the infant to practice reaching, grasping, and manipulating an object. Infants will differ in their readiness to hold one or more items. Some infants may grasp one toy and release it when the second toy is presented. Some infants will hold the first toy and grasp the second toy with the opposite hand. Infants often shake toys and explore the texture by bringing it to their mouth. As described in the *ELM Curriculum User Guide: Birth–36 Months*, mobile infants may "take off" with the toy! Be patient in awaiting their return.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ The infant may need your help in holding a soft toy while he/she explores it with eyes and hands. ■ Use your leg to provide extra support for an infant who is learning to sit well-balanced. Your extra support will help the infant focus attention on the toys, without giving much attention to sitting. Maintaining focus is an important self-regulation skill.

Enrichment ■ An infant who readily grasps and manipulates a toy may enjoy a back-and-forth game of passing the toy with you. ■ If the infant enjoys the activity, offer a third toy, such as a rattle.

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BLOCK 4

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

Infants strengthen their ability to look at different objects.

Key Concepts
Look

Inside

Materials Needed
1–2 plastic bottles with items—1 per infant (see Be Prepared)

Box or basket

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Create discovery bottles for infants by putting a variety of small craft items into non-breakable bottles and securing the lids. Provide bottles with contrasting weight and different items. Water makes a bottle heavier and makes items inside float. Bottles with only light items inside offer a contrast infants will notice. Be sure to secure all lids with glue and tape.

Place all the bottles in a box or basket and invite several mobile infants to explore the toys. Sit on the floor facing the infants. If singing at the beginning of an informal gathering is a routine in your room, sing a favorite song. Invite the infants to remove the bottles from the box. An infant who is walking may enjoy carrying one or both bottles from place to place.

Talk about the bottles and encourage the infants' exploration. Describe and draw attention to what is inside the bottle. Example: "Look at what is inside this bottle. This bottle has a feather inside." Pause for an infant to respond. Point to the bottle you are describing. Some infants may focus on putting bottles into the box and taking them out again. Draw attention to the differences and similarities of the bottles. Describe each infant's actions.

What to Look For—Option 3

Notice how infants manage this open-ended play activity. As suggested in the activity description, some infants may focus on a bottle's contents, whereas other infants may enjoy moving the bottles around. To help infants focus on bottle contents, describe items in the bottle or characteristics of the bottle, including differences in bottles. Example: Point and say "this one is light." Touch or point to a water-filled bottle and tell the infant "It is heavy." To support infants who move the bottles around, talk about their actions or arrangements they may make with the bottles. Example: If an infant is interested in gathering the bottles, emphasize the concept of more bottles. You may also observe an infant moving the sensory bottles to a basket or cart to push.

Infants who crawl may enjoy pushing the bottles on the floor to make them roll. The craft items in liquid will move differently than small objects in an empty bottle. Walking infants will notice the difference in the weight and feel of the bottles while carrying them.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ To support an infant who seems unclear about how to approach the activity, offer to hold the infant on your lap or have the infant stand near you. Turn one bottle over and describe the movement of the items in the water.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

Enrichment ■ Put beads inside bottles to produce sound when an infant shakes it. ■ Create a game by placing all the bottles in a tub or basket and ask mobile infants to help you take them out. Emphasize "in" and "out".

Interest Area

Materials needed: see activity description

Provide materials for infants to look at and manipulate. Non-mobile infants will enjoy exploring small rattles and books with textures, such as *Baby Touch and Feel Cuddly Animals* by D.K. Publishing. Rattles with handles and soft toys, such as texture bears or cloth dolls, will appeal to early mobile infants. Mobile infants typically like to play with stacking cups that include soft play materials inside that they can remove. Mobile infants also like to explore texture books, such as *Baby Touch and Feel First Words* by D.K. Publishing

Family Child Care

Materials needed: puppets, soft toys, dolls or teddy bears, tub, sand, water

Children of all ages enjoy looking at, touching, and manipulating novel things. Preschool- and school-age children may enjoy playing with puppets or other soft toys while you engage an infant in Option 1 or 2. Consider setting up a tub with dry sand and giving toddlers and preschool-age children small amounts of water to add to the sand. Talk with children about how sand feels when it is dry and when it is damp. Preschool-age and older children will enjoy learning how to use a mold to form a shape with wet sand.

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BLOCK 4

Paying Attention

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

A young infant watches a caregiver make different kinds of facial expressions.

Key Concepts
Watch

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

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

ACT: [*Smile and encourage the infant to make eye contact with you.*]

ASK: I am smiling at you! Do you see my face?

[*Pause and acknowledge the infant's response. Describe any visual attention the infant gives to you. Example: "You are looking at me! You can see that I am smiling at you. Now you are smiling too!"*]

ACT: [*Keeping a pleasant face overall, move your facial features into a different expression for several moments. You may start with smiling while sticking your tongue out. Describe the infant's response. Example: "You are watching me! You are still smiling. I think you liked my silly face!" Change your expression and describe the change. Example: "Now I am making my eyes and mouth open big! Do you think I look silly?" Some infants may try to imitate your actions, such as sticking their tongue out when you do. Others may enjoy watching your face change with each expression.*

Explain that you are going to make a face like the infant's face. Example: "Now I am going to copy what you are doing. You are smiling. I am smiling too! What are you going to do next? I will copy you!" Continue to imitate the infant's facial expressions for several moments if the infant remains engaged.

Transition from the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest, such as looking elsewhere. Example: "You are done looking at me. We can do something else now."]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you describe what happened. Example: "You watched me make different faces. Then I copied your face! We had fun making faces together."*]

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BLOCK 4

Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

An infant watches a caregiver make different kinds of facial expressions, including imitations of the infant's expressions.

Key Concepts
Watch

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit with you for a short game. Place the infant facing you on your lap, holding him/her securely around the waist. Give the infant a large smile and encourage him/her to make eye contact with you. Example: "Good morning, Isaiah! I am happy to see you today. Do you see my face? I am smiling." Pause and describe the infant's visual attention. "You are watching me. You are looking at me smiling." Move your facial features into several different expressions, pausing and describing each one. Start with an expression the infant can easily identify, such as sticking out your tongue. Example: "I am going to stick out my tongue. I am making a silly face. Do you see?" Describe the infant's reactions. The infant may watch your face closely and may imitate you. Also, imitate and describe an infant's facial expression. Example: "You are yawning. I am going to yawn, just like you."

Wrap up the exchange when the infant begins to lose interest. Example: "I think you are done watching me. Let's find another activity." Acknowledge the infant's focus during the activity. Example: "We had fun watching each other, Laila. You watched me smile and make silly faces. Then we both stuck out our tongues! Thank you for playing with me."

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Paying Attention *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

An infant participates with a caregiver in making different facial expressions, including the opportunity to imitate the caregiver's expressions.

Key Concepts
Watch

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to play a face game with you. Sit facing the infant and invite him/her to stand up while holding on to both of your hands. Place your arms firmly around his/her waist if it appears the infant is unsure of his/her position. Make eye contact and ensure the infant feels secure and ready for the activity. Smile big at the infant and encourage him/her to watch your face. Example: "I am smiling at you, Isabela. I am happy that we are playing this game together! You are watching me and smiling too. Please watch what I do next!" Change your facial expression several times, pausing with each one to describe your actions as well as the infant's responses. Example: "You are watching me stick out my tongue. Now you are sticking out your tongue! We are both making a silly face." Invite the infant to make faces for you to imitate. Example: "Now I am going to watch you! What face are you going to make? I will do the same!"

Transition out of the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest with the game. Acknowledge the infant's focus during the activity. Example: "You watched me make different faces. Some of the faces made you laugh! Then we made some faces together. I had fun playing this game with you."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of the three options provides opportunities for an infant to visually focus on the expressions of a human face, which is an inherently appealing activity for infants. Ensure the activity is enjoyable for the infant by keeping your expressions pleasant or silly. Avoid stern or unpleasant facial expressions.

Watch the infant's interest in the activity closely to determine how much to change your facial expressions or how long to sustain the activity. An infant may focus on your face for several minutes or begin to lose interest much sooner. It is useful to draw the infant's attention to his/her participation, including instances of looking at your face and your making a face that mimics the infant's facial expression. An infant is likely to show disinterest in obvious ways, such as looking away, fussing, squirming, or crawling/walking away.

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Paying Attention *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ If an infant needs extra support to focus on you, bring your face slightly closer to the infant's face and repeat several changes in exaggerated facial expressions. Example: offer a large smile with your mouth open, smile with your tongue out, then return to smiling with your mouth open. ■ Use the infant's name frequently to encourage engagement in the exchange.

Enrichment ■ Engage an infant in front of a large mirror. Encourage the infant to focus on your expression in the mirror, and then to explore his/her own reflection in the mirror. ■ Vary your facial expressions to include more subtle changes, such as raising your eyebrows.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: books with pictures of human faces, large mirror

Place the books near a large, unbreakable mirror. Invite one or several toddlers to look at pictures in the books. Mimic some of the faces pictured in the book. Encourage the infants to look at their own faces in the nearby mirror. Some infants may examine their reflection closely, whereas others may make faces in the mirror. Young infants are unlikely to be aware that the reflection they see in the mirror is their own.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: book with pictures of different human facial expressions, Optional: age-appropriate handheld mirrors

Children of all ages enjoy making different faces. Read with children a book that includes illustrations of different facial expressions. Pause on each page and invite toddlers and older children to imitate a pictured face. After the book reading, invite one child at a time to make a face for others to imitate. Infants and younger toddlers will enjoy watching their older peers make different faces. You may wish to offer mirrors for the children to hold as they make different faces.

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BLOCK 4

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver, focused on a toy rattle.

Key Concepts
Smile
Look
Listen

Materials Needed
Soft rattle

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

BEGIN: [*Sit in a comfortable position holding an infant in your arms or on your lap, facing you.*

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Hello, Jeremiah! You had a nice nap. You are all rested. Would you like to play with me? I am happy you are here today!" Watch the infant for signs of interest in engaging in a back-and-forth interaction with you. The infant may show interest in interacting by gazing at you, vocalizing, kicking his/her legs, or reaching toward you. Acknowledge the infant's reactions, including any vocalizations, facial expressions, or gestures. Example: "You are smiling, Kiara! I smiled at you, and you are smiling at me!"

If the infant shows signs of disinterest, such as looking away, fussing, or turning away from you, end the activity and try engaging him/her at a later time.]

ACT: [*Introduce the toy rattle.*]

Look! I have a rattle for us to play with! Listen to the sound it makes. Maybe you would like to touch and hold the rattle.

[*Hold the rattle about 12 inches from the infant. Gently shake and move the rattle slowly from side to side to attract the infant's attention. Watch for the infant to respond by gazing, batting at, or reaching for the rattle. When the infant responds to the toy, move it to the infant's hand. Hold the rattle for the infant to touch if he/she is not yet grasping.*

Describe the infant's reactions to the toy. Examples:

- *"Your eyes got wide when you saw our toy. Your eyes are following the rattle."*
- *"You kicked your feet when you heard the rattle, Diego! I think you like our toy. I will hold it close so you can touch it."*
- *"You reached for the rattle as soon as you saw it, Christina! I moved it closer. Now you are holding it."*

Continue interacting with the infant as he/she explores the rattle. Respond to vocalizations and facial expressions. Wrap up the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of the interaction. Example: "Thank you for sharing time with me, Christina. We talked about the rattle. You moved the rattle and listened to the sound it made! You kicked your legs when you listened to the rattle. We had fun together."*]

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BLOCK 4

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant participates in open-ended play with a caregiver, focused on toy animal figures and a muffin pan.

Key Concepts
Look
Smile
Play

Materials Needed
Small animal figures
Muffin pan

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Cognitive

Be Prepared: Place one animal figure in each cup of the muffin pan.

Invite an infant to sit with you on the floor to play. Introduce the muffin pan with animals and invite the infant to explore the new materials. Example: "We have some new toys today. Look at the animals in the pan! What would you like to do with our new toys?" As there are no specific ways to use the materials, this activity focuses on the interpersonal connection with the infant. Watch the infant's reactions as he/she explores the materials and allow the infant to lead the activity. Some infants may remove the animal figures to explore them, whereas others may focus on taking out and returning the animal figures to the muffin pan.

Describe the infant's actions. Examples: "You are smiling at the new toys. You are taking out the animals. I wonder what you are going to do next!" "You are holding a pig. You are looking at the pig's curly tail." "You are looking at the toys and kicking your legs!" "I can see you are smiling and reaching for the animals. You want to play with our new toys."

If the infant appears hesitant to interact with the materials, offer suggestions for play. Example: "You are looking at the animals. Would you like to take an animal out? Which one should we look at first? How about the brown horse?"

Remember to pause for the infant to respond to your comments.

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BLOCK 4

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver that include opportunities to move animal figures from one muffin pan to another.

Key Concepts
Look
Smile

Materials Needed
Small animal figures
2 muffin pans

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Cognitive

Be Prepared: Place one animal figure in each cup of one muffin pan. Leave the second pan empty.

Invite an infant to play a game with you. The infant may wish to sit with you on the floor or stand at a low table for the activity. Introduce the muffin pan with animals inside and place the empty muffin pan nearby. Encourage the infant to explore the materials for several moments.

Invite the infant to take the toy animals out of the muffin pan and put them in the empty pan. Provide a demonstration and description with one animal figure, if appropriate. Describe the infant's actions with the materials. Example: "You picked up a toy cow. Where are you going to put the cow? I see where you are putting it!" Follow the infant's lead as he/she interacts with the materials. If the infant appears hesitant, offer help and suggestions to extend the play. Example: "You took all the animals out of the pan. Look at all the animals lined up on the floor! What would you like to do next? Maybe you can put the animals in this pan!" Also, follow the child's lead on whether he/she wants you to participate in moving around the animal figures. Example: "Would you like me to help you?" Recognize and respond to the infant's reactions during the activity. Example: "I think you are excited about this new game! You are smiling and looking at all the animals."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Open-ended activities are good opportunities to engage in positive interactions with an infant. You can promote responsive exchanges with the infant by commenting on the infant's actions with and reactions to the materials, and perhaps also by helping the infant play with the materials. Use the infant's reactions to the materials to shape the focus of your role, including whether the infant seems interested in your helping to manipulate the objects (especially in Options 2 and 3). Watch for and respond to vocalizations, focused looking, facial expressions (such as smiling) and other gestures or movements (such as clapping). Older infants may be interested in carrying a toy around the room. Maintain proximity to the walking infant and continue the interaction if possible.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ If a toddler appears uninterested in moving animal figures from one pan to another pan in Option 3, simply put aside the second pan and encourage participation with strategies suggested for Option 2. ■ If you anticipate offering a toy figure in each of the cups of a pan may be too overwhelming in Option 2 or 3, use a smaller number of toys. ■ Some infants may benefit from a longer period of time for exploring the animal figures in the opening segments of Options 2 and 3. ■ Remember to pause frequently for the infant to respond.

Enrichment ■ While the young infant in Option 1 explores the sounds of the rattle, sing a familiar song softly. You may wish to incorporate the infant's name or actions into the song, such as "Shake, shake, shake the rattle. Juan is shaking the rattle." ■ Encourage the infant to engage with the materials in Options 2 and 3 in new ways. Example: the muffin pan could be turned over and animals could be placed on top of the cups rather than inside.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of small toys, such as animal figures; 2 muffin pans; basket

Provide opportunities for infants to independently explore the materials included in Options 2 and 3. Place the small toys in the basket and lay the muffin pans nearby. You may wish to place a few toys in the cups of both pans to generate interest in the materials. Infants may enjoy exploring the animals individually, or practice filling and dumping the muffin pans. Infants may enjoy watching their peers engage with the materials in similar ways. Describe the infants' actions with the materials. Recognize facial expressions and repeat and extend any vocalizations while the infants play.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: various items to put in muffin pans (see below), 2–3 bowls or baskets, 2–3 muffin pans

Provide different types of items for children to explore putting in muffin pans. Infants will enjoy animal figures, large pop beads, rattles, and caged bells. Toddlers will enjoy counting bears, large pebbles, and plastic shapes from a shape sorter. Preschool-age children will enjoy large buttons (that are not a choking hazard), and craft pom-poms. Older children may like to sort items as they place them in a muffin pan. Older infants may enjoy putting items in, and then taking them out, of the pans.

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BLOCK 4

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An infant watches a caregiver make sounds by shaking a toy, with the opportunity to hold and shake a sound-making toy.

Key Concepts
Hold

Shake

Materials Needed
1 small bell

1 small rattle

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor facing an infant who is on his/her back or tummy. Place the infant on his/her back if the infant is not able to push up with his/her arms and holds its head/neck.*

If the infant is on his/her back: Hold the rattle in one of your hands and the bell in your other hand. Hold the two toys near the center of the infant's chest within easy reach of the infant and within the infant's line of vision. Do not place either of the toys in the infant's hand without first providing a sustained opportunity for the infant to reach for one or both of the toys.

If the infant is on his/her tummy: Place the rattle and the bell directly in front and within easy reach of the infant.

Gently move the toys as you present each, one at a time as suggested below. Point to your ear when you say "hear."]

Here is a rattle. Listen. Do you hear the sound of the rattle?

Shake, shake, shake. I am shaking the rattle. The rattle is making a sound.

Here is a bell. Listen. Do you hear the sound of the bell?

Shake, shake, shake. I am shaking the bell. The bell is making a sound.

ASK: Do you want to shake the rattle? Do you want to shake the bell?

[*Encourage the infant to hold the bell or rattle with either hand. Shake the rattle or bell slightly if the infant does not look at the toys you offer. Depending on the infant's motor development, he/she may or may not reach for the toy you offer.*

Invite the infant to shake the toy(s) he/she is holding. Offer a demonstration by gently shaking a toy, if appropriate.]

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

ACT: [*Describe the infant's actions. Examples: "You looked at the bell and at the rattle. You smiled when you heard the sound of the bell. You are holding and shaking the bell. You are smiling when you shake your bell." "You are shaking the bell in one hand and holding the rattle in your other hand."*

Allow the infant to simply hold or mouth the toy if he/she likes. If the infant is not holding both of the toys, take the toy not being used by the infant and shake it. Describe what you are doing and the sound you are making. Ask the infant if he/she would like to shake his/her toy.

Offer the infant the toy you are holding and shaking. Provide an opportunity for the infant to reach for the toy rather than immediately putting it in his/her hand.

Describe the infant's vocalizations. Example: "You are laughing. You are laughing while you shake your bell."]

RECAP: We went shake, shake, shake with a bell and a rattle today. We heard the sound of a rattle and the sound of a bell.

What to Look For—Option 1

At this age, an infant may be engaged for a few seconds or may be interested in the sound making and interaction for several minutes. Be attentive to the infant's reactions to the sound of a toy. The infant may turn away or fuss if the sound is displeasing. If an infant prefers the sound of one toy over another, describe the infant's preference. Example: "I think you like the sound of the bell. We can put down the rattle for now." Welcome mobile infants who want to join you but be careful to not share toys that an infant has mouthed. Remember that an infant's interest in the activity is supported when you convey it is both interesting and enjoyable.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If an infant drops or throws the toy, describe the infant's action, pick up the toy, and offer it again to the infant with a gentle shake. If the infant continues to drop or throw his/her toy, move to a different activity and return to the rattle/bell at a later time. ■ If an infant shows interest in touching or holding a toy, but is not able to shake the toy while holding it, you may need to help the infant hold the toy so he/she can feel it. Describe the infant's actions.

Enrichment ■ Draw attention to the difference in the sound of the bell and the sound of the rattle without describing each sound. Example: "The bell and the rattle make different kinds of sounds. Listen. Here is the sound of the rattle. Here is the sound of the bell." ■ Sing a familiar song while shaking your sound maker. Encourage the infant to shake his/her sound maker as you sing. Incorporate the infant's name into the song.

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BLOCK 4

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An infant shakes different types of sound-making toy(s) with caregiver guidance.

Key Concepts
Shake
Sound

Materials Needed
1 small bell
1 small rattle
1 ring with beads inside
1 small tray

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Cognitive

Sit on the floor facing an infant who can sit with support or sit independently. Put the three toys on the tray with sufficient space between each so the infant can clearly see each item. Place the tray of toys in front of you. Gently shake each item as you say its name and your action. Example: "This is a bell. I am shaking the bell. The bell is making a sound. This is a rattle. I am shaking the rattle. Listen to the sound the rattle is making. This is a ring. The ring makes a sound when I shake it. Shake, shake, shake. Our toys make a sound when we shake them."

Hold the tray of toys near the center of the infant's chest. This provides an opportunity for the infant to practice reaching and grasping one or more of the toys. Encourage the infant to take one or more of the toys and to shake each toy he/she takes.

Describe the infant's actions. Examples: "You looked at the bell, the rattle, and the ring. You picked the (name of toy) to hold and move." "You are shaking the ring and making a sound." "You moved the rattle from one hand to another hand."

Take a toy not being used by the infant and shake it. Describe what you are doing and the sound you are making. You may wish to shake the toy in different ways (up and down, all around, side-to-side) but do not expect the infant to follow your pattern. Be sure to return the toy to the tray so the infant can hold it and maybe shake it. Draw attention to differences in the sounds of the toys.

What to Look For—Option 2

Watch for opportunities to show and describe how moving a toy with our hand can make a sound. If an infant shows interest in the ring, point to and name the beads inside the ring. Show how the beads move and make a noise when the ring is moved. Encourage the infant to move or shake the ring while watching the beads move around. This is another way to help an infant begin to understand that his/her action produces the sound. Although you may move a toy in different ways, as suggested in the activity description, remember that your role is to support the infant's movement of a toy with his/her hand, not to entertain the infant with your own actions.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Adapt your introduction of each toy to accommodate the infant's level of interest. Example: Do not introduce all three toys if the infant immediately reaches for the first toy you describe and demonstrate.

Enrichment ■ If the infant shows interest in taking turns with making a sound, follow his/her lead. Make a sound with your toy after the infant makes a sound with his/her toy. Say "Your turn" after you make a sound. Lean closer to the infant to prompt him/her for his/her turn. Imitate the sound he/she made. Examples: Make a short sound if the infant made a short sound. Make the sound for a longer period of time if the infant made the sound for a longer time.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An infant participates with a caregiver in shaking a sound-making toy with one or two hands.

Key Concepts
Shake
Sound

Materials Needed
2 bells (see Be Prepared)
2 rattles (see Be Prepared)
1 small tray

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Cognitive

Be Prepared: One bell and one rattle are for the infant's use. One bell and one rattle are for your use.

Sit across from an infant who can sit alone. Place one bell and one rattle on the small tray. Encourage the infant to take one of the sound makers. Use the same type of sound maker the infant uses. Put the other sound makers (yours and the infant's) on the floor behind you. Use your same toy to imitate the actions of the infant. Describe the sounds. Example: "Our bells are ringing, ringing. You are shaking your bell to make it ring. I am shaking my bell to make it ring."

Sing a song that supports the infant's actions with the toy. See the following suggestion. Include the child's name in the song and gently shake your same toy as you sing. (Tune: "Wheels on the Bus")

Riana shakes a bell, with one hand;
With one hand; with one hand.
Riana shakes a bell, with one hand;
He/she makes a happy sound!

Lightly touch the infant's opposite hand. Ask the infant, "Would you like to move the (name of toy) with your other hand?" Demonstrate and describe the movement of your toy from one hand to another hand. Then say to the infant, "Let's try the other hand. I will sing a song for you." Gently move the infant's toy from one hand to the opposite hand if the infant seems interested in moving the toy to his/her other hand. If the infant is not interested in switching the toy to a different hand, acknowledge his/her wish. Example: "I think you want to hold your toy where it is. That's fine." Repeat the song you offered earlier in this activity. Encourage the infant to move the rattle or bell as you sing.

What to Look For—Option 3

Although this activity mostly supports fine motor development, an important gross motor action is involved in securing the toy. Pay close attention to whether the infant has the body strength and balance to reach for the toy. The infant must sit and lean forward to reach the toy and return to a sitting position unless you provide the toy to him/her (see Extra Support tip).

Look for opportunities to emphasize how movement of the infant's hand is what makes the toy make a sound, as suggested in the plan description. One of the ways this option is more challenging than Option 2 is the involvement

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

of four toys (two of each type) for the infant to notice. The activity plan suggests moving toys not being used behind your back to help the infant focus on one type of toy being manipulated.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If the infant is unable to reach the sound maker, hold it in your hand close to his/her midline. ■ Provide extra support for the sitting infant by moving your leg behind him/her, or offer a supportive cushion.

Enrichment ■ If the infant moves his/her sound-making toy to another hand, acknowledge this in your song. Example (Tune: "Wheels on the Bus"): "Riana moved her toy to her other hand, other hand, other hand. Riana moved her toy to her other hand. And she's making a pretty sound." ■ Demonstrate how to move one toy in each hand. Ask the infant if he/she would like to play both the bell and rattle. ■ Draw attention to the differences in the sounds of bell and rattle.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: wrist rattles; sound makers, such as bells or rattles

Young infants who do not sit independently will enjoy wrist rattles. Fasten the wrist rattle to an infant's arm. Encourage the infant to move his/her arm by talking, smiling, and looking at the infant. Describe the sound. Example: "Your rattle makes a sound. Shake, shake, shake." Talk with the infant about the sound his/her wrist rattle is making.

Place sound makers on a low table where mobile infants can discover them. Sit nearby so you can talk with the infants and join them in making sounds with a bell or rattle. As you shake the bell or rattle say, "My rattle makes a sound. Shake, shake, shake."

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: things in your setting that make sounds, such as a box of cereal or pasta, set of measuring spoons, crumpled paper

If older children are interested in the sound-making activity, suggest they listen while you and the infant make sounds. Ask the older children to describe how the sound is being made (by moving our hands). Later, take children on a walking tour of your home to find things that make sounds when you move or touch them. Examples: box of cereal or pasta, set of measuring spoons, crumpled paper. As you touch or move each item, comment on how you are moving the item and the sound it makes. Example: "I am moving this paper. This paper makes a crunch, crunch sound." Point out how moving an item with your hand (and maybe your arm) makes the sound.

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BLOCK 5 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of a little boy's routine.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of a little boy's routine.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book, and communicate about pictures of a little boy's routine.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) An infant holds, looks at, and manipulates 2–3 nesting cups.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in open-ended play with several small toys and a basket.

Option 3 (OO) An infant participates with a caregiver in open-ended play with 2–3 nesting cups.

Self-Regulation

Getting Calm

Option 1 (OO) An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity of touching and holding a novel ball.

Option 2 (OO) An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity of shaking a sound-making ball.

Option 3 (OO) An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity of rolling a sound-making ball.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a puppet managed by a caregiver.

Option 2 (IG) Infants participate in responsive interactions with a caregiver while looking at book illustrations.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants participate in responsive interactions with a caregiver while playing with blocks and animal figures.

Physical/Health

Using Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) An infant participates in open-ended play with a toy that includes opportunities to reach for the toy.

Option 2 (OO) An infant practices extending his/her arms to reach and grasp different objects.

Option 3 (OO) An infant practices reaching and grasping by moving pop beads from one bowl to another bowl.

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

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BLOCK 5

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of a little boy's routine.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

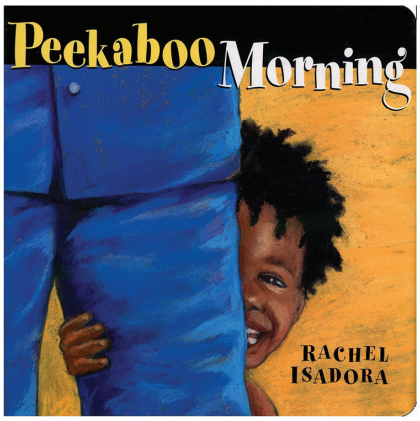
Materials Needed
Peekaboo Morning by Rachel Isadora

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*]

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

ASK: I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the little boy? The little boy is peeking at us!



[*Pause for the infant's response. The young infant may show interest in the book by vocalizing, turning toward you, gazing at the picture, or reaching out and batting at the book. Acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the little boy peeking. Let's turn the page and see what's next!"*]

EXPLAIN: This is a little boy. He is peeking out at us! Our book is about what the little boy sees in the morning. Let's open the book and see what's on the next page!

ACT: [*Open the book to the first page. Point to and talk with the infant about the picture. At this age, it is not necessary to read the text. Infants will benefit from hearing you talk about the pictures as you share the book together. Example: "Do you see the little boy? The little boy is in bed. His eyes are open. The little boy is waking up!"*

Continue to engage the infant in the book, using strategies, such as the following:

- *Point to and describe pictures. Examples: "Peekaboo! The little boy sees his mommy. The mommy is holding her little boy. The little boy looks happy." "What is the little boy going to see next? The door is open. The little boy is looking outside. Let's turn the page to see what he is looking at outside!"*
- *Spend a little more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the little boy's toy train. The little boy is playing with his train! What is he going to see next?"*

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

- *Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are kicking your legs and looking at the little boy's puppy. Oh my! The little boy is using his spoon to feed his puppy!"*
- *Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book sharing. Infants may enjoy a slightly higher pitch and a slower tempo as you talk about the pictures. You may wish to use a sing-song voice to emphasize the rhythm of the rhyming text.*

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book about everything a little boy sees when he wakes up in the morning. We looked at pictures of the little boy's family. You kicked your legs when you looked at the picture of the boy's puppy! You smiled at the picture of the little boy's friend. This was a fun book to read together!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

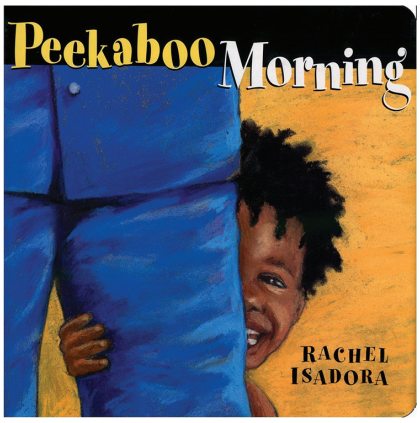
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of a little boy's routine.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Peekaboo Morning by Rachel Isadora

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "Look! Do you see the little boy? The little boy is peeking out! Our book is about all the things the little boy sees when he wakes up in the morning. I wonder what the little boy is going to see first."



Encourage the infant to turn book pages with you. Share the book with strategies, such as the following:

- Point to and name pictured objects. Encourage the infant to look at the objects you point to and describe. Example: "The little boy is eating cereal. Here is the bowl for his cereal. This is the boy's spoon. Look. The little boy is using his spoon to feed his puppy! What else do you see?"
- Be sure to talk about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. You may wish to provide additional context or information. Example: "You are looking at the little boy's toy train. His toy train is blue. Look at how the boy is using a string to pull his train. Where do you think he wants to take his train?"
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'boo!' The little boy's friend is covering his eyes. I think she is playing *Peekaboo* with him! Let's turn the page and see what is next!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "The little boy is smiling. He is playing with his daddy. You play with your daddy! What do you like to play with your daddy?"
- Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book reading. Infants may enjoy some anticipation as you say "Peekaboo! I see…." Turn the page with enthusiasm to reveal what the little boy sees.
- Follow the infant's cues about the pace of book reading. Turn the pages as slowly or as quickly as the infant seems to prefer. Watch for an infant's signal to stop the book reading.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Gabrielle. You looked at the pictures of the little boy and his family. You touched the picture of the puppy! You smiled at the picture of the little boy with his friend. I think you liked this book!"

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

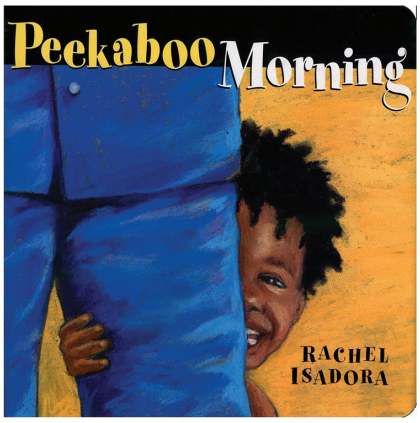
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book, and communicate about pictures of a little boy's routine.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Peekaboo Morning by Rachel Isadora

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or prefer to stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to hold the book and turn the pages. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages. You may wish to keep all of the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time.



Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look! Do you see the little boy? The little boy is peeking out at us! Our book is about this little boy and all the things he sees in the morning! Would you like to help me turn the page to read the book?" The infant may help you turn the page or turn the pages independently. Use strategies, such as the following, to share the book with the infant:

- Point to and label objects in the pictures. Example: "This is the little boy. He is looking at his grandma! His grandma is wearing a hat. She is holding a green frog!"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you label. Example: "The little boy sees a bunny! Peekaboo bunny! Where is the bunny in our picture?"
- Describe what the infant is looking at and provide additional context or information. Example: "You are looking at the little boy giving his grandpa a kiss. His grandpa is smiling. I think the little boy loves his grandpa!"
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Examples: "You said 'woof.' Dogs and puppies say 'woof!' The little boy is feeding his puppy!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "The little boy wakes up and sees his mommy. Then the little boy sees his daddy. Who do you see when you wake up in the morning?"
- Show enjoyment and enthusiasm as you read the text. Emphasize 'peekaboo!' throughout the book. Some infants may repeat a version of the word 'peekaboo' with you.
- Follow the infant's cues as to how quickly or slowly to look at and talk about illustrations. Some infants may turn pages forward and backward, and others may want to return to a favorite page several times.

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped hold our book, Cameron. You pointed to the little boy's puppy. You said 'woof!' You turned the pages to see what was next! We had fun reading this book together."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Many infants will connect with this book's familiar theme of waking up in the morning. Infants will likely enjoy looking at the pictures of what the little boy sees when he wakes up, including his family. Infants will show interest in the pictures by gazing, pointing, touching, or using his/her hands to bat at or tap the pictures. Infants may also express interest in the book by vocalizing—including cooing, babbling, and later saying a word or making a corresponding sound (such as a train 'choo-choo.') Older infants may imitate your sounds and/or intonation as you read. Older infants may also express interest by pointing or turning the pages in the book to a particular picture. Encourage the infant to have an enjoyable experience with the book in his/her own way. Some book sharing activities may be long, others much shorter.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Softly sing or chant "peekaboo, I see . . ." on each page as you or the infant turns to the next picture. ■ Be flexible about skipping pages or returning to pages of interest to the infant. The book does not follow a plot that is essential to understanding the story.

Enrichment ■ Provide an object or prop related to the book for the infant to hold during or after the book sharing, such as a blanket, spoon, toy dog, toy train, or stuffed rabbit.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Peekaboo Morning* by Rachel Isadora, several stuffed animals or baby dolls, several small blankets or scarves

Share the book with the infants during floor time. Provide stuffed animals or dolls for the infants to touch and hold. Help an infant place a blanket over their doll or animal for "bedtime." Then announce that it is morning and encourage them to lift the blanket in a *Peekaboo* game. Infants may enjoy repeating this game several times.

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Peekaboo Morning* by Rachel Isadora; new materials for the housekeeping area, such as dolls, pillows and blankets, toothbrushes, hairbrushes, bottles, dress up "pajamas," and lullaby books

Share the morning-themed book with children and talk about their morning routines. Invite children to play with the new materials in the housekeeping area. If appropriate, suggest play themes that include morning routines. Infants may prefer to interact with one or two props during the activity.

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BLOCK 5

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

☑ Skill and Goal

Object inquiry skills
Problem-solving

An infant holds, looks at, and manipulates 2–3 nesting cups.

Key Concepts

Hold
Look

Materials Needed

3 nesting cups

Also Promotes

Physical/Health

BEGIN: [Sit on the floor facing an infant who can sit alone or an infant on his/her back. Establish a connection with the infant by talking about what the infant is doing. Example: "Hi, Joseph. You are sucking on your hand."

After about 15 seconds of interaction, hold a medium-size nesting cup close to the infant at the center of his/her chest and within the infant's line of vision. Move the cup gently around or from side to side, and explain that this is a cup we can play with. Slowly move your finger on the side of the cup and describe how it feels smooth. Do not place the cup in the infant's hand without first providing a chance for the infant to reach for the cup with one or both of his/her hands.]

ASK: (Infant's name), would you like to hold the cup?

EXPLAIN: [*Describe the infant's reaction to the cup. Example: "You are holding the cup and looking at the cup. Now you are shaking the cup!" "You are using your mouth to feel the rim of the cup."*]

ASK: Do you want to hold another cup?

[*Offer the smallest cup at the infant's midline at a distance comfortable for reaching. If the infant does not show interest in the second cup, explain that you will hold the cup in your hand while the infant plays with the other cup. Hold the second cup in the palm of your hand within the infant's vision.*

Describe the infant's actions with one or both cups. Examples: "You are feeling the cup with your finger." "You are holding one cup in each hand." "You are making a sound by tapping the two cups together."]

ACT: [*For a sitting infant only: Place the largest (third) nesting cup in your palm and offer it to the infant.*

If the infant takes the third cup, describe what the infant does. Examples: "You put the little cup on the floor so you can hold the big cup. That is a good idea!" "You are looking at the big cup. You put the little cup under your arm and took the big cup. Good idea!"

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

If the infant does not take the third cup, hold it in the palm of your hand so the infant can see it. Describe the situation with the third cup. Example: "I think you do not want to hold the big cup. You are looking away from me. I will hold the big cup. You are holding two smaller cups. Good idea!"]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe what the infant did with the cup(s). Examples: "We played with cups. You decided to play with one cup only. I got to hold the other cup." "You felt with your hand." "You tapped two cups together. You made a sound."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

The nesting cups offer a smooth surface for an infant to explore. Offering each cup at the center of the infant's body is intentional, aimed at facilitating the infant's ease of potentially reaching for a cup and seeing the cup. There is no right or wrong way for an infant to approach the opportunity to hold, look at, and manipulate two or three cups. When presented with a second or third cup, an infant may drop a cup(s) in order to grasp a different cup. Or a sitting infant may solve the problem of how to hold an additional cup by putting a cup in his/her lap. An infant may show great pleasure in making a sound by tapping two cups together. Avoid telling the infant what to do with a cup. Few infants will discover the cups can be nested together. It is not necessary to demonstrate or describe how to hold, manipulate, or organize two or three cups.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Offer the smallest rather than medium-size nesting cup if a smaller cup will be easier for an infant to hold and manipulate. ■ The infant may need your help in holding a cup while he/she explores it. ■ If an infant is used to drinking from a cup, you may need to explain that our cup is empty. It is a cup to play with. ■ If a cup falls to the floor, hold it close to the infant's chest where it is easy to grasp. Encourage the infant to take the cup. If the infant does not take the cup, hold the cup in the palm of your hand so the infant can see it.

Enrichment ■ The infant may enjoy passing nesting cups back and forth to you. ■ If a sitting infant shows interest in continuing to explore the cups, you might place the cups on the floor within easy reach of the infant so the infant experiences a different way of seeing and reaching for the cups. If the infant indicates a desire to continue, hold all three cups in your palm close to the infant's chest so he/she may grasp the cups. Another option is to stack the three cups and place them near the infant so the infant experiences a different configuration of the cups.

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BLOCK 5

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant participates in open-ended play with several small toys and a basket.

Key Concepts
Look

Materials Needed
3 small bright toys
small basket

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Select three small, attractive toys (that are not necessarily similar) for an infant to grasp and manipulate. Select toys based upon the infant's interests and development. Place the toys near a basket, all within easy reach of a sitting or standing infant.

Encourage the infant to look at and play with the toys. Infants will differ in how they approach this opportunity. Some may enjoy putting items in the basket and then emptying the basket or removing items one at a time from the basket. An infant who can walk might carry the basket with one, two, or three of the toys to another part of the room. Some infants may ignore the basket. It is not necessary to instruct the infant or to expect a certain outcome. You may see infants react in distinctly different ways to the materials you present. Quietly describe the infant's actions and characteristics of the toys explored.

What to Look For—Option 2

Infants have a strong drive to learn about their environments and generally use all their senses to form an understanding of how something works. Finding familiar items together near a basket is an opportunity to see and touch objects and to discover how they are the same or different. The development of crawling gives infants greater opportunities to explore.

Although infants have individual styles for learning, some strategies are widely used by infants, such as mouthing, banging the object on the floor or table, and shaking the object. It is important to give the infant time to explore in his/her own way.

An essential aspect of the activity is your role in describing objects and actions. Your simple descriptions help an infant begin to understand that each object has a name and that his/her actions with the object can be described. If an infant shows interest in one of the toys only, direct your comments and focus accordingly. It is not necessary for the infant to explore all three toys.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Point to an object when you offer its name. ■ Offer two rather than three toys if you anticipate the infant will respond better to a smaller collection. ■ Place the toys in the basket, rather than next to the basket, if the infant enjoys taking things out of containers.

Enrichment ■ Offer an achievable challenge by using the basket to cover the toys as the infant watches. Some infants may be interested in finding the toys.

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BLOCK 5

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills
An infant participates with a caregiver in open-ended play with 2–3 nesting cups.

Key Concepts
Open
In

Materials Needed
3 nesting cups (small, medium, and large)
Cloth bag

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Place the cups inside the bag and fold the bag's top to hide the cups.

Invite a mobile infant to explore the cloth bag and toys inside. Sit on the floor facing the infant. Infants who have learned to walk may prefer to stand and explore on a low surface. Point to the bag and explain there are toys inside. Use your voice to create interest in the surprise!

Encourage the infant to open the bag and remove the cups. Assist the infant in opening the cloth bag if needed. If an infant does not begin to look for the toys, touch the outside of the bag and talk about what you feel. Example: "This bag feels bumpy. Let's look in this bag and find a toy!"

Describe the infant's discovery of a cup. Examples: "You found a little red cup in the bag." "This cup is big." Encourage the infant to look until all three cups are found. Describe the infant's actions with the cups.

If an infant seems interested in putting the cups together, offer an invitation that the infant may or may not pursue. Example: "Let's find out more about the cups." Demonstrate nesting the cups by placing the smallest cup into the medium-size cup. Point to the two cups. Explain: "Our small cup fits in the larger cup." Remove the smaller cup and encourage the infant to nest the cups. Some infants may enjoy placing one cup into a bigger cup. Some infants may prefer to take three nested cups apart. Use the activity to support an infant's emerging development and interests.

What to Look For—Option 3

Watch how the infant manages the two different problem-solving opportunities embedded in the activity: the basic task of opening the bag and removing the cups, and the more challenging task of fitting 2–3 cups together. Some infants may open the bag and peek inside, and others may dump the toys by holding or shaking the cloth bag. Describe the strategy used by the infant to get to the toys hidden inside. For many mobile infants, finding surprises in bags or boxes is an enjoyable experience.

For the more challenging problem-solving opportunity, the activity plan suggests that you demonstrate fitting one cup inside another if the infant shows interest. Give just enough help so that an infant can fit one cup into another that is slightly larger. To nest 2–3 cups requires an infant to have a beginning idea of size, along with fine motor skills to place one cup inside another. This portion is offered for infants who show interest. Do not offer this opportunity if the infant shows no interest in fitting together the cups. Also, at this age, most infants will not be able to stack the cups. Some infants will be pleased to open the bag and remove the cups.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

Also look at how the infant explores characteristics of the cups (object inquiry skills). Infants are active learners who find out about objects in their environments by looking, touching, mouthing, grasping, moving, or manipulating them. In this cognitive activity, an infant is supported in exploring each individual cup and exploring the set of three cups. An infant may act upon the cups by tapping them together, holding the cups, or knocking them down. Observe the infant's responses to the cups and talk with him/her about each one. Some infants may vocalize a reaction to the toys. Repeat and extend an infant's vocalizations. Example: "Ooh, yes! You found the biggest cup!"

Some infants may engage in a pretend action with the cup that suggests he/she knows that we can drink from a cup.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Place two rather than three cups in the bag. ■ Hold the bag open so an infant can reach his/her hand inside to get the cups. ■ If an infant seems cautious about opening the bag, remove the cups one by one as you describe each one. Then put the cups back in the bag and encourage the infant to remove them.

Enrichment ■ Place the cups on the floor or table with the smallest cup to the child's left. Starting at the left supports later reading and writing from left to right. Point to and describe each of the three cups. Begin with the smallest cup on the infant's left. Emphasize words that describe the cups. ■ Hold the bag open and encourage the infant to drop one or all of the cups back into the bag. The infant may wish to repeat the activity.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: cloth and board books, soft toys, rattles, mirror, bowl, small balls, dolls, nesting cups, push toys, puzzles

On the floor next to an infant mirror, arrange small toys for nonmobile infants to view, such as cloth books, soft toys, and rattles. Early mobile infants may enjoy putting items into bowls and then taking them out. Arrange nesting cups on the floor to be discovered by crawling infants. Place a second group of nesting cups on the floor next to a nonbreakable mirror. On another day, arrange the nesting cups with small toys inside. Stack the nesting cups for infants to topple. Mobile infants will enjoy playing with objects they can carry, wheel toys to push, and toys that fit into containers.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: nesting cups, large cups

In addition to engaging an infant in one of the activity options, offer older children an opportunity to play with nesting cups. Toddlers will enjoy putting small nesting cups inside the larger cups. Adjust the level of challenge so the toddler can be successful. Limit the number of nesting cups to three if nesting more cups is too challenging. Preschool-age children will enjoy building a tower with nesting cups.

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BLOCK 5

Getting Calm

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity of touching and holding a novel ball.

Key Concepts
Touch
Hold
Calm

Materials Needed
Oball Rollin' Rainstick Rattle®

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

BEGIN: [*Hold the infant in your arms with his/her head well supported in the bend of your arm. Smile and make eye contact. Introduce the toy by holding it up for the infant to see and touch.*]

ASK: I have a toy. Would you like to play with it?

[*Pause and acknowledge infant's response. Example: "I see you are looking at the toy. I will hold it so you can touch it."*]

ACT: [*Provide mildly stimulating uses of the ball for the infant. Hold the ball close for the infant to touch if he/she wishes. Provide assistance in exploring the ball's features, such as shape, feel, and sound. Examples: "Our ball is round. It has holes for our fingers to hold onto. "Let's look inside. What do we see? I see lots of tiny balls in different colors!"*

Follow the infant's interest in looking at and manipulating the ball. Some infants will enjoy watching you move and touch the ball. Others may prefer to hold the ball and possibly place their mouth on exposed areas. If the infant appears disinterested or distressed at any time, remove the ball and provide comfort.

After the infant has an opportunity to fully explore the ball, put it away and explain that it is time for us to calm down. Hold the infant close to provide physical comfort, such as gently swaying back and forth in a calming motion. You also may wish to quietly sing a familiar song, or offer soft-voice reminders that it is time to rest. It may be helpful to reposition the infant to provide a clear signal that playtime with the ball is over.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you review the activity. Example: "We had fun with our new toy! You told me with your big smile that you liked to hold the ball. Then we put the ball away. I held you while you got calm again."*]

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity of shaking a sound-making ball.

Key Concepts
Shake

Calm

Materials Needed
Oball Rollin' Rainstick Rattle®

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to play with a toy. Place the infant on your lap facing out. Introduce the ball and invite the infant to touch and hold it. Encourage the infant to hold the new toy and feel its characteristics. The infant may try to put a part of the ball in his/her mouth.

Explain that you want to shake the ball to find out how it sounds. Example: "I wonder what our ball would sound like if we shook it. Would you like me to shake it so we can listen together?" Do not shake the ball if the infant shows a clear "no" response, such as looking away or trying to push away the ball. Instead, encourage the infant to touch or hold the ball, similar to Option 1. If the infant seems interested in your shaking the ball, make sounds with the ball by moving it in front of the infant. Carefully watch the infant's response. Shake the ball with less intensity or stop shaking the ball if the infant shows signs of not liking the sound or the action.

- If the infant has a positive or curious response to your shaking the ball, invite the infant to shake it. Help the infant hold and shake the ball, if appropriate. Describe the actions that cause the sound.
- After the infant has an opportunity to hold, touch, and/or shake the ball, quietly announce that we are done playing with the ball. It is time for us to rest and be calm. Put the ball away and support the infant in returning to a calmer state. Hold the infant and provide physical comfort, such as slowly patting your hand on his/her back. It also may be helpful to quietly hum or sing a familiar song. Provide gentle reminders as needed.
- Acknowledge the infant's efforts to be calm after the exciting activity. Example: "We had fun playing with our new toy! We shook the ball and listened to the sounds it made. Then we put the ball away. We are resting. You are sitting with me and we are calm."

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BLOCK 5

Getting Calm *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity of rolling a sound-making ball.

Key Concepts
Roll

Calm

Materials Needed
Oball Rollin' Rainstick Rattle®

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite a mobile infant to join you on the floor to play with a new toy. Sit facing the infant and give him/her the ball to hold and feel. Encourage the infant to move or shake the ball and listen to the sound it makes. Offer to roll the ball on the floor with the infant, while listening to the sound of the rain stick inside the ball. Example: "I wonder what our ball would sound like if we rolled it on the floor. Would you like to roll the ball with me and we can listen together?" The infant may prefer for you to roll the ball. After several rolls of the ball on the floor, invite the infant to roll the ball toward you. A back-and-forth rolling exchange may emerge. Describe actions with the ball (yours and the infant's) and emphasize the sound it is making. The colorful movement of the ball may appeal to the infant, too.

After the infant has had the opportunity to roll the ball (or watch you roll the ball), offer a reminder or brief summary of what happened with the ball. Example: "You had fun rolling the ball on the floor with me today, Sofia. We listened to the sounds it made!" Then announce it is time to put the ball away and to become calm. Example: "We put the ball away. The ball is quiet now. It is time for us to rest and become calm." The infant may want to sit near you or on your lap. Provide quiet time and offer to pat the infant on his/her back. You also may wish to quietly hum or sing a favorite song. Offer gentle reminders that it is time to rest, if needed.

Recognize and acknowledge the infant's behavior as he/she becomes calm after the activity. Example: "We had fun playing with our new toy! Now you are sitting with me and resting. We are feeling calm."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

The three options offered in this activity plan correspond to an infant's motor skills in exploring the ball. Option 1 assumes an infant interested in the ball is able to touch and perhaps hold the ball, but is not yet ready to shake the ball. The Option 3 focus on rolling the ball offers the most advanced opportunity in this plan for manipulating the ball. Pay close attention to the infant's reactions throughout the activity and make adjustments if needed. Keep in mind that an infant may have the motor skills to vigorously shake or roll the ball but this action may be too stimulating. In these instances, it is important to share control of the ball with the infant. Stop the activity and provide comfort if the infant shows any signs of distress.

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

It is valuable for an infant to play with the ball as long as the infant shows interest and not signs of overstimulation or fatigue. Severely limiting the playtime may prompt strong protests when the ball is taken away. But not limiting the playtime may provide too much stimulation or decrease interest in the ball. Watching the infant's reactions will provide cues on when to transition to the calming segment of the activity.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ If rolling the ball in Option 3 is too stimulating, shift to the Option 2 approach to the ball. ■ Take a brief break from the ball (without taking it away) if the infant seems too excited.

Enrichment ■ In Option 3, promote a back-and-forth rolling exchange with the ball if the infant is readily rolling the ball and seems interested in participating in a roll pattern with the ball.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: clear spinning top with balls inside

Invite an infant to interact with a toy that is likely to provide mild excitement when you have time to actively support the infant's transition to a calmer state. Infants will enjoy seeing the balls move when the top spins. Some infants will be able to help you spin the top, and others may spin it independently. When the infant begins to indicate signs of high excitement or disinterest, such as looking away or shifting focus to another activity, use a calm voice to tell the infant that playtime with the top has come to an end. Support the infant's interest in pursuing another activity or help the infant become calm by using the strategies suggested in Options 1–3.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of different balls including the Oball Rollin' Rainstick Rattle®

Children of all ages enjoy playing with new and different balls. Older children may enjoy sitting in a circle with legs wide and feet touching their neighbor to roll a ball back and forth. Toddlers may participate by being placed next to an older child to help the game progress more smoothly. Infants can be a part of the circle by sitting on your lap. Before moving on to the next activity, invite all the children to sit quietly for a few moments. You may wish to softly recite a simple rhyme while sitting with the children.

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BLOCK 5

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a puppet managed by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Look

Listen

Materials Needed
Hand puppet

Infant pillow/cushion

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back on the pillow/cushion so the infant is supported in a reclining position.*

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Hello, Ana! I am happy you are here today. Would you like to play with me?" Acknowledge the infant's reactions to you, including any vocalizations, facial expressions, or gestures. Example: "You are kicking your legs, James! You are looking at me. I think you would like to play!"]

ACT: [*Introduce the puppet. Example: "Look, I have a special friend with me today! You can listen to our friend talk. Would you like to talk to our friend?"*

Hold the puppet about 12 inches from the infant. Talk softly with the infant and move the puppet slowly from side to side to attract the infant's attention. Watch for the infant to respond, perhaps by gazing, batting at, or reaching for the puppet.

Puppets may be new to some infants. Offer reassurance if the infant seems to be uncertain about the puppet. Example: "Our puppet is nice. I can make the puppet talk when I put the puppet on my hand, like this." Describe the puppet using the puppet's voice. Example: "I have soft fur. Would you like to pat my head?" Demonstrate patting the puppet's head, if appropriate.

If the infant is not yet reaching or grasping, bring the puppet to the infant's hand to touch.

Use the puppet to interact with the infant. Describe the infant's reactions, including vocalizations or facial expressions. Examples: "You are smiling at our puppet. Your eyes are watching the puppet move from side to side!" "You reached for the puppet. You touched the puppet's head and the puppet's eyes!"

Wrap up the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of the interaction. Example: "You had fun talking with our puppet friend today, Carly! You kicked your legs when the puppet sang you a song. Then you patted the puppet's head! The puppet felt soft. I think you liked our puppet friend."*]

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Infants participate in responsive interactions with a caregiver while looking at book illustrations.

Key Concepts
Look

Materials Needed
Picture book (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Cognitive

Be Prepared: Select a picture book, such as one in the *Baby Touch and Feel* series by DK Publishing, that you anticipate will be of interest to infants and has not been used extensively in your room.

Engage several infants who can sit with support or sit independently in looking at pictures in a book. Display and talk about the pictures, making sure all infants can easily see the illustrations. Encourage infants to look at a picture as you describe it. Use the book sharing as an opportunity to (a) show responsiveness to an infant's interest in a picture and (b) demonstrate you are paying attention to the infant's reactions and participation in the session. Examples: "I see you are looking at the picture, Isaiah." "Kiara, you are smiling at the picture of the kitten. I think you like kittens." Acknowledge any infant attempts to gain your attention. Focus on interactions between the infants and you. The books are in a secondary role in support of this goal.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Older infants participate in responsive interactions with a caregiver while playing with blocks and animal figures.

Key Concepts
Play
Blocks
Animals

Materials Needed
Soft blocks (see Be Prepared)
Animal figures
Basket

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: For each infant, secure 2–3 blocks and 1–2 animal figures you anticipate you will appeal to the infants. Place the animal figures in the basket.

Invite two infants to play on the floor with you. Place the blocks in front of the infants. Invite each infant to select 1–2 animals from the basket. Encourage the infants to play with the blocks and animals. Example: "Let's play with the blocks and animals! What would you like to do with your blocks and animals?"

Use the play time as an opportunity to demonstrate you are paying attention to each infant's play with the materials and potential bids for your attention.

Watch for opportunities to promptly acknowledge an infant's bid for your attention. Examples: "Yes, Ivanna, I see your cow. What are you going to do with your cow?" "I hear you saying something, Jamal. I will move closer so I can hear you."

Describe for an infant how his/her look, gesture, and/or vocalization got your attention. Examples: "Jamie, you are holding a block out to me. I think you want me to look at your red block. Would you like me to move the block with you?" "You are tapping me, Jasmine. I would like to help you. Can you point to what you need?"

What to Look For—Options 1–3

The activities provide opportunities to (a) let infants know you are paying attention to their actions and (b) respond positively to infants' bids for attention. Some requests for your attention will be obvious, such as waving, tapping you, climbing on your lap, or vocalizing. Other requests may be more subtle, such as moving closer to you without looking directly at you. Use both obvious and subtle requests to show an infant that his/her requests will be warmly acknowledged. Your responses help an infant develop social-emotional strengths in interacting with a familiar adult. Your responsiveness also fosters an infant's emerging sense of competence in knowing how to meet one's needs for comfort, contact, reassurance, and closeness.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Smile and nod frequently at infants to acknowledge their play actions. ■ Move closer to an infant to let him/her know you are available and open to his/her communications. ■ At the beginning of Option 3, distribute the animals to each infant from the basket if you anticipate it may be challenging for some infants to choose or limit their selection.

Enrichment ■ Provide a second puppet for the infant to touch and hold during Option 1. ■ Provide a greater selection of books for the infants to select from in Option 2. ■ Provide additional animals and other materials for the infants to play with during Option 3.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several age-appropriate animal puppets, such as Get Ready Kids Bigmouth Farm Puppet Set (with embroidered eyes)

Provide opportunities for infants to explore the puppets independently. Infants will likely be excited to explore the puppets. Older infants may attempt to place the puppets on their hands and others may touch and examine features of the puppets.

Sit on the floor near the puppets and watch for requests for attention. Respond warmly and positively when an infant brings a puppet to show you or approaches you for interaction and closeness.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of books with a variety of challenge levels

Provide designated time for all children to select and look at books independently. Maintain close proximity and watch for requests for attention. Use responses, such as those suggested in Options 2 and 3, to let children know you are interested in their efforts.

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BLOCK 5

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development
Gross motor development
An infant participates in open-ended play with a toy that includes opportunities to reach for the toy.

Key Concepts
Reach

Materials Needed
Small toy
Baby links

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: Attach a chain of connecting links to a small toy that you anticipate will be of strong interest to the infant.

BEGIN: [*Place an infant on his/her back on a firm surface, such as a carpet or activity mat. Kneel or sit at the infant's feet. Begin by engaging the infant in an interaction with you by talking, smiling, and making eye contact. Example: "Hi Niko. Are you ready to play?" Pause for the infant to react non-verbally or with a sound.*

Describe the infant's reactions to your voice. Example: "Niko, you are smiling and kicking your feet. Your eyes got wide when I said your name. I think you are ready to play!"]

ACT: [*Hold the connecting links with the toy suspended over the infant's chest within his/her reach. "Maybe you would like to move our toy or hold our toy."*

Encourage the infant to reach for the toy. Be sure to hold the object at the midline over the center of the infant's chest. Offer encouraging words if the infant tries to reach for the toy. Example: "You are reaching for our toy, Niko!"]

ASK: Would you like to hold our toy?

[*The infant will likely adjust his/her reaching as the toy naturally sways. Swinging the connecting links is not advised because it prevents the infant from successfully reaching the toy. Leave pauses in your speech for the infant to respond to you or to focus fully on the toy.*]

ACT: [*Remove the toy from the links so the infant can explore the toy by touching and moving it on his/her own. The infant may also bring the toy to his/her mouth for more exploration. After several minutes, change the infant's position and bring the activity to an end.*]

RECAP: [*Describe the infant's specific actions and responses to the activity. Example: "Niko, you really liked our toy swinging over your chest. You liked kicking your feet and swiping at the toy with your hands."*]

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

What to Look For—Option 1

Watch carefully the infant's level of interest in the activity. Lack of attention may indicate a need to increase or decrease the challenge. Keep in mind that swinging the links does not help the infant reach for the toy. Lack of attention also might indicate the toy is not of interest to the infant. You may wish to try a different toy.

An infant who has learned to roll over may change positions after he/she has a hold on the toy.

If an infant becomes overstimulated during the activity, talk softly to him/her and place your hand on his/her leg, tummy, or upper arm. Some infants may need to be held in order to regain a calm state.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If touching a hanging toy is too difficult, remove the links and hold the toy in your hands over the infant's chest so the toy is clearly visible to the infant. The important goal of the activity is to encourage the infant to reach for a desired object.

Enrichment ■ For an infant who can hold his/her head up, place several toys on a low surface and hold the infant in a supported sitting position. Encourage the infant to reach for the toys. ■ Move the toy above the infant's feet. Touch the infant's feet with the toy. Next move the toy a few inches above the infant's feet. Encourage the infant to touch the toy with his/her foot.

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BLOCK 5

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development
Gross motor development
An infant practices extending his/her arms to reach and grasp different objects.

Key Concepts
Reach
Touch
Hold

Materials Needed
3 or 4 small blocks

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Self-Regulation

Gather several small blocks. Invite an infant who is learning to sit independently to sit on your lap facing a low table. Sit close to the table and hold your hands around the infant's torso to provide support. You may also wrap one arm around the infant's middle for support.

Place one block close to the infant. Encourage the infant to reach his/her arms out to touch the block. Next, place a second block close to the infant. Watch the infant's reaction to seeing two blocks. An infant may drop the first block to reach the second, or hold one block in each hand.

Pay attention to how far the infant can extend his/her arm and hand. These actions are central to reaching. Place items within challenging but achievable reach. If an infant seems agreeable, briefly remove one block and then put it back to provide another reaching opportunity and to support the infant's attention to the block. Be aware of signs of fatigue and bring the activity to a close if the infant appears tired or stressed.

What to Look For—Option 2

At about six months, many infants develop the upper body strength needed to lean forward and return to an upright position to examine a toy. Muscles supporting the head and back are engaged when the infant leans forward and/or manipulates the blocks. Returning to an upright and balanced position may be a challenge for some infants. If sitting at a low table is not comfortable for the infant, move the activity to the floor. Sit behind the infant to give extra support for sitting if needed. Some infants may enjoy leaning forward and changing to a prone position to explore the toy.

Include small animal figures to strengthen interest in reaching. Depending upon your knowledge of the infant, consider adding playful sounds to your interaction, such as saying "Ta-da!" when the infant grasps a toy. Some infants may enjoy the feeling of tapping the blocks on the tabletop.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Place the infant in a supportive sitting position. Hold a block in the palm of each of your hands near the infant. Make sure the blocks are in the infant's line of vision and can be reached by the infant. ■ Carry on a responsive dialogue with the infant as he/she makes vocalizations while working to reach and grasp the blocks. Repeat babbles, coos, or gurgles made by the infant.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

Enrichment ■ If an infant has fun leaning, encourage him/her to reach to the side with the opposite hand. Give the infant a toy to hold in his/her right hand. Place another toy on the table that the infant can grasp by leaning and reaching with the opposite hand.

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BLOCK 5

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development
Gross motor development
An infant practices reaching and grasping by moving pop beads from one bowl to another bowl.

Key Concepts
Reach
Pick up

Materials Needed
2–4 nonbreakable bowls
4–5 pop beads per participant

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Social-Emotional

Sit on the floor next to an infant who sits independently. Place several pop beads into one bowl. Ask the infant if he/she would like to join you in playing with the beads. Begin to transfer pop beads from one bowl to the other. Encourage the infant to move the pop beads from one bowl to another. Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You are using your arm to reach for a bead. You are using your hand to pick up a bead."

You may wish to use separate bowls, one set for the infant and one set for you. This arrangement supports parallel activity with the beads. Another option is to use two bowls only, with both you and the infant moving beads from one bowl to another. This decision may rest on whether you expect to continue moving beads after the infant engages in transferring beads from one bowl to another.

Other small toys may be used instead of pop beads.

What to Look For—Option 3

This activity builds on infants' inherent interest in moving objects from one place to another place. It is rarely a boring activity in the very early years. Look for opportunities to emphasize how the infant is using his arm to reach and his hand to pick up a bead.

An infant who can stand or walk may enjoy the activity on a low surface. Be sure to place the materials at a suitable height, so the activity remains focused on arm and hand movement.

Note the Enrichment tip about promoting use of a different hand. Imagine the infant's midline as an invisible line marking left and right sides of the body. Encouraging an infant to reach to one side with the opposite hand while maintaining balance supports the development of body coordination, strength, and balance.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Bring the bowl of pop beads closer to the infant if reaching and grasping are challenging. ■ Encourage the infant to take one pop bead at a time. You may wish to hold the bowl of available beads for the infant to take one and then move it slightly away from the infant after he/she takes a bead, so the infant focuses on putting the bead in the other bowl. ■ Clap when the infant places a pop bead in the other bowl.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

Enrichment ■ Make a little game out of moving the bowl to one side to encourage an infant to reach to one side with the opposite hand so that the infant's hand crosses the midline. Example: Place the bowl to the infant's left and encourage him/her to use one hand, and then the opposite hand, to drop the toy in. ■ Add fun by making a silly sound each time a toy drops into the bowl! Example: "S-w-i-sh. Plunk." ■ Consider using toys that make a sound when they are dropped.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: infant gym, sock rattle, pop beads, bowl, muffin pans, tennis balls

Playing on the floor helps infants develop strength and coordination. For a few minutes, a nonmobile infant may enjoy swiping at toys attached to an infant gym. Infants generally enjoy kicking their feet. Placing a sock rattle on one or both of an infant's feet also promotes kicking. For infants who can sit independently, place loose toys, such as pop beads, in a bowl on the floor. Crawling to the bowl to dump the toys out will be enjoyable for some infants. Infants will move from hands and knees position to a sitting position in order to tip the container or remove the toys one by one. On another day, place muffin pans with tennis balls in a location where crawling infants will discover them.

Infants who have learned to pull up to stand will enjoy manipulating play materials on a low surface. Infants often delight in dropping toys from a low surface to the floor. Return the play materials to the low surface and encourage the infants to try again. Infants who can walk will enjoy discovering pop beads and muffin pans in the sensory table. Some infants may place pop beads into the muffin pan. At this age, infants are not expected to put pop beads together.

Family Child Care

Offer toddlers and preschool-age children opportunities that incorporate moving their legs and arms at the same time. Example: play a game of make-believe with children, such as pretending to be birds. Encourage children to flap their "wings" as they move from place to place. When playing indoors, the children might pretend to fly from an imaginary branch to a nest. Structure the pretend game by making up and singing a song about movements or destinations. Encourage children to listen to the song to learn what to do. Examples: "see the birds flying high," "see the birds fly to their nest . . . it is time to rest."

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BLOCK 6 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to the caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of animal mothers and babies.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of animal mothers and babies.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book and communicate about pictures of animal mothers and babies.

Cognitive

Solving Problems

Option 1 (OO) A young infant chooses a toy to play with.

Option 2 (OO) An infant chooses toys for open-ended play with a caregiver.

Option 3 (IG) Infants choose a sound-making toy to shake as part of a small gathering of mobile peers.

Self-Regulation

Focusing and Remembering

Option 1 (OO) An infant is encouraged to persist in reaching for a toy during tummy time.

Option 2 (OO) An infant is encouraged to persist in reaching for a toy from a sitting position.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) An infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver focused on a teddy bear.

Option 2 (IG) Infants are encouraged to imitate a caregiver's simple actions with a teddy bear.

Option 3 (IG) Infants participate in a book sharing that includes an opportunity to move teddy bears in ways similar to movements described in the book.

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (OO) An infant manipulates a rattle while lying on his/her tummy or back.

Option 2 (OO) An infant manipulates a bell while sitting independently or with support.

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

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BLOCK 6

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to the caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of animal mothers and babies.

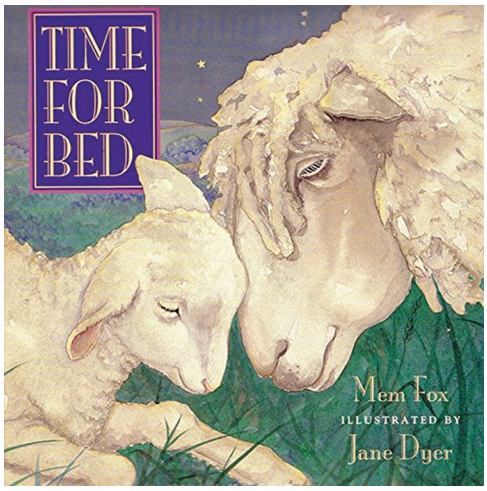
Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Time for Bed by Mem Fox

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional

BEGIN: [*Sit with a young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

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



ACT: I have a book for us to read together! Look, here is a picture of a mama sheep and baby sheep.

[*Pause and watch for the infant's response. The young infant may show interest in the book by vocalizing, turning toward you, gazing at the picture, or reaching out and batting at the book.*

Describe the infant's reaction to the book. Example: "You are looking at the mama and baby sheep, Taylor. I can hear you cooing! Let's turn the page and see what animals are next!"]

EXPLAIN: This is the mama sheep. This is her baby lamb. It is time for bed. The mama is saying goodnight to her baby. Our book is about animal mommies saying goodnight to their babies. Let's open the book and see what's on the next page!

ACT: [*It is not necessary to read the text. Infants will benefit from hearing you talk about the pictures as you share the book together. Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:*

- *Point to and describe pictures. Examples: "Here is the mama cow. Here is her baby calf. The moon is in the sky because it is nighttime. Look, there are stars in the sky too! It is bedtime for the little calf." "The mama fish is saying goodnight to her baby fish. Look at the bubbles! Let's see if we can find the little fish!"*
- *Spend more time talking about pictures of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the flowers. Here is the mama bee on the flower. Here is her baby bee on this flower. The mama bee is saying goodnight to her little bee."*

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

- *Describe the infant's gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are kicking your legs and looking at the mama fish making bubbles. I think you like this picture with the bubbles!"*
- *Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book sharing. The infant may enjoy a slightly higher pitch and a slower tempo as you talk about the pictures.*
- *Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest.*]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book about animal mommies saying goodnight to their babies. We looked at pictures of different animals. You kicked your legs when we looked at the picture of the bubbles!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

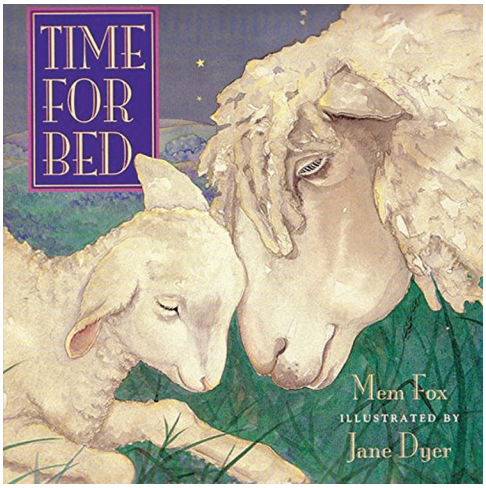
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of animal mothers and babies.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Time for Bed by Mem Fox

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "Look, do you see the sheep? This is a mama sheep. This is her baby lamb. It is time for the baby lamb to go to bed. Our book is about animal mommies saying goodnight to their babies. I wonder what animals we are going to see in our book!"



Watch the infant's response to the book introduction. The infant may show interest by gazing at the cover picture, vocalizing, and/or reaching toward the book. Some infants may grasp the book and attempt to turn the pages. Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:

- Point to and name pictured objects. Example: (Point to each object as you say its name.) "This is a mama mouse. The mama mouse is saying goodnight to her baby mouse. Look, the mama is hugging her little mouse tight. What else do we see?"
- Encourage the infant to help you turn the pages.
- Describe what the infant is looking at. Example: "You are looking at the baby cat snuggling with the mama cat. It is time for bed. The little cat is sleeping. The mama cat is licking her little cat. Do you see the mama cat's pink tongue?"
- Spend more time talking about pictures that appear to be of particular interest to the infant. You may wish to provide additional context or information. Example: "You are looking at the mama snake. The mama snake is big. Look, here is her baby snake! The baby snake is small. It is time for the little snake to go to sleep."
- Describe the infant's gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are touching the picture of the little goose. You are smiling! The little goose is yellow and fuzzy. I think you like this picture."
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "The animal mommies said goodnight to their babies. Look at the little boy! It is time to sleep. His mommy is saying goodnight. You go to bed at nighttime. Your parent says goodnight to you!"

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

- Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book reading. The infant may enjoy hearing some of the rhythmic, rhyming, repetitive text read in a sing-song voice. Emphasize the repeated phrases at the beginning of each page.
- Conclude the book sharing by describing the infant's participation. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Isaac. You looked at the pictures of the animal mommies and babies. You touched the picture of the little goose. You smiled at the picture of the mommy saying goodnight to the little boy. You helped turn the pages of our book!"

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BLOCK 6

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

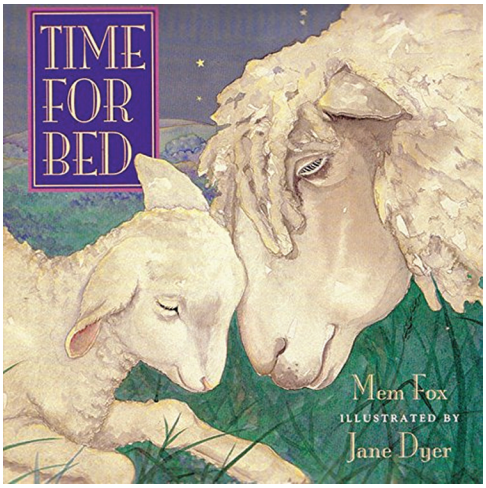
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language

An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book and communicate about pictures of animal mothers and babies.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Time for Bed by Mem Fox

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health



Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to hold (or help you hold) the book and turn its pages. Example: "Look, do you see the mama sheep and baby sheep? It is time for bed. The mama sheep is saying goodnight to her little sheep. Our book is about animal mommies saying goodnight to their babies. Would you like to help me turn the page to read the book? Would you like to hold the book?" A sitting infant may help you hold the book and turn the pages. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.

Use the following strategies to engage the infant with the book:

- Point to and label pictured objects. Example: "This is a mama horse. This is her baby horse. Look at the baby horse's long legs!"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you label. Example: "This is the mama dog. Where is her baby puppy in our picture? You can point to the puppy!"
- Encourage the infant to turn the pages as you read the book. Provide assistance, if needed, by keeping all the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. Follow the infant's cues as to how quickly or slowly to turn the pages. Some infants may turn pages forward and backward, and others may want to return to a favorite page several times.
- Describe what the infant is looking at and provide additional context or information. Example: "You are looking at the mama fish. Let's look for her baby fish. There is the little fish! (Point.) The mama fish is talking to her baby. She is making bubbles. Let's point to the bubbles!" Spend more time talking about pictures of particular interest to the infant.
- Describe and respond to the infant's gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'night night!' Yes, it is time for the little cat to go to sleep. Goodnight, little cat!"
- Encourage the infant to connect book information to his/her experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "The little bird is going to sleep with the mama bird. Birds sleep in a nest. Where is the birds' nest in the tree? We don't sleep in a nest! Where do you go to bed and sleep?"

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

- Show enjoyment as you read the rhythmic, rhyming, repetitive text. Emphasize the repeated phrases "it's time for bed" and "it's time to sleep" throughout the book.
- Conclude the session by recognizing the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped hold our book, Maddie. You pointed to the little snake. You said 'night night' when you looked at the little cat. You turned the pages to see what was next! We had fun reading this book together."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Many infants will connect with the book's familiar theme of going to bed. Infants will show interest in the pictures by gazing, pointing, touching, or using his/her hands to bat at or tap the pictures. Infants may also express interest in the book by vocalizing, including cooing, babbling, and perhaps saying a word or making a corresponding sound (such as a cow 'moo.') Older infants may imitate your sounds and/or intonation as you read. Older infants may also express interest by pointing or turning the pages in the book to a particular picture. Some book sharing activities may be long, others much shorter.

Infants will benefit from your descriptions of the book's rich illustrations. Example: The little fish may be difficult for infants to find and focus on. Using your own words to describe pictures is highly important. Example: The book does not use the word "baby," but many infants may more readily understand that the mother sheep is saying goodnight to her baby than to her little sheep.

Acknowledge an infant's disinterest in the book, such as looking away, fussing, or turning his/her body away from the book. Example: "I can see you are squirming away from the book. I don't think you want to read our book right now, Joaquin. I can hold you or we can find another activity."

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Softly sing or chant "time for bed" or "time to sleep" to the animals pictured on a page. ■ Depending on the infant's reaction to the book, it may be helpful to point out the mother and baby on each page rather than reading the text. Example: "Here is the mama cat. Here is the baby cat."

Enrichment ■ The infant may enjoy holding an animal figure from the book or a favorite blanket during and/or after the book sharing. ■ Introduce an older infant to the concepts of "big" and "small" (or "little," as used in the book text) on pertinent pages of the book. You may use your hands to demonstrate big (open wide) and small (close together) with the infant.

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Time for Bed* by Mem Fox, several stuffed animals or baby dolls, small blanket or scarf

Provide follow-up time with the book that includes stuffed animals or dolls for infants to touch and hold. Gently place the small blanket or scarf over an animal/baby and repeat the phrase from the book "It's time for bed, little (name of animal or baby doll), little (name of animal or baby doll)." Some infants may say "night night" to their animal/doll. Infants may enjoy repeating this action.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several books with a goodnight theme, such as *Time for Bed* by Mem Fox, and *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown; toy barn and farm accessories; assortment of farm animal figures

Share the "goodnight" themed books with the children in your care. Arrange the farm animals and barn on a low table, placing the books nearby. Invite small groups of children to play with the farm materials. Infants can be held on a lap at the table and given a farm animal figure to manipulate. As the children engage with the materials, suggest a play theme of the animals going in the barn to sleep, then coming out to play. Some toddlers and children may enjoy moving the animals in and out of the barn, whereas others will have their own ideas for play.

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BLOCK 6

Solving Problems

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills
A young infant chooses a toy to play with.

Key Concepts
Look

Materials Needed
1 sensory baby doll
1 texture bear

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Global Babies by Global Fund for Children Books

BEGIN: [*Place a non-mobile infant on his/her back so he/she can easily see your face and toys you present. Place an infant who can sit independently or with support on the floor, facing you.*]

EXPLAIN: Here are two toys. You can play with the toys.

[*Hold the doll and bear side by side about 12 inches from the infant so he/she can clearly see the toys.*

Wiggle the doll slightly to draw attention to the toy. Describe the doll. Example: "Our baby doll is wearing a hat. The doll has a smiling face."

Next wiggle the bear while you hold the doll still. Talk about the bear's texture and color.

Describe the infant's reactions to the toys. Example: "Anthony, you are waving your arms and smiling at the bear. I think you like the happy face on our bear."]

ACT: Which toy you would like to play with?

[*Based on the infant's reactions to the two toys, hold the preferred toy close to the infant again so the toy can be easily touched or grasped by the infant. Put aside the other toy. Invite the infant to hold the preferred toy. Example: "Do you want to hold the teddy bear?" Pause for the infant to focus on the toy and respond to seeing it again.*

If the infant does not touch the preferred toy, offer to touch the infant's arm or hand with the toy.

Describe the infant's actions with the toy, such as looking or touching or mouthing.]

RECAP: [*Describe highlights of what happened. Example: "Today you looked at a baby doll and a teddy bear. I think you liked the teddy bear a lot. You held the teddy bear and then gave it back to me."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

Carefully observe the infant's gaze to determine which toy seems to be preferred and whether the infant appears interested in touching or holding a toy. Provide ample time for the infant to look at the toys. Before infants are able to reach for objects of interest, vision is their primary means of exploring. Some infants may prefer to look at but not touch (or be touched with) a toy. Avoid overstimulating the infant by paying attention to his/her non-verbal signals and not using the toys as entertainment. Remember that the activity emphasizes the infant's consideration of two different toys.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Move the toy slowly into the infant's visual range and avoid startling him/her by using a calm, slow pace.

Enrichment ■ Say the name of the infant's body part when you gently move a toy toward the infant. Example: "Here comes our teddy bear to see your toes." Touch the infant's feet with the soft toy.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

An infant chooses toys for open-ended play with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Big

Little

Materials Needed
1 big soft bear

1 small soft bear

4 stacking cups (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Select stacking cups that differ in size and/or color.

Sit on the floor next to an infant and ask if he/she would like to join you in playing with some soft bears. Place the soft bears near the infant and describe each one. Example: "Here is our big bear." Pause. "This is our little bear." Emphasize the words big and little.

Encourage the infant to choose one of the bears. Emphasize again the words big and little. Use the bear not preferred by the infant for your participation in the play session.

Offer two different stacking cups as dishes for pretend food for the bears. Set them side by side so the infant may easily reach both. Example: "Here is a little cup for bear's food. Here is a big cup for her food. Which cup would you like to use?" Use the cup not preferred by the infant for your participation in the session.

If the infant remains interested, offer the second set of two different cups for pretend milk or water for the bears. Use the procedures described above for presenting the two cups. Again, encourage the infant to select one cup for giving a drink to his/her bear. Use the other cup for your own actions.

Engage the infant in play that could involve holding the bear, feeding the bear, and maybe putting the bear to bed. Incorporate routines that are familiar to an infant. Describe what the infant does with his/her bear and other toys, and emphasize the concepts used to describe the items, such as big and little. Mimic actions an infant does with his/her toys.

What to Look For—Option 2

Infants are likely to differ in how long they look at choices before showing a preference for one of the two items you offer. Monitor their gaze, keeping in mind that looking is an important way to explore objects. It is not necessary for the infant to use items initially chosen for the entire play session. An infant

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

may wish to switch bears or cups with you as part of the play. Positively accommodate this interest. The length of the playtime is expected to vary considerably across infants.

Most of the words you use in this session will be unfamiliar to an infant. Your facial expressions and hand gestures are valuable ways to supplement your words. Emphasizing and repeating key words in a meaningful context informally supports an infant's language development over time.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Use the names of foods liked by the infant, such as peaches and milk, as part of the pretend play. ■ Point to items as you describe each and speak clearly and slowly.

Enrichment ■ Offer two different small boxes, such as shoeboxes, as pretend beds. Encourage the infant to pick one for his/her bear to sleep in. Also, if an infant wishes to repeat the activity on a different day, offer two different-colored washcloths as pretend blankets for the bear.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

Infants choose a sound-making toy to shake as part of a small gathering of mobile peers.

Key Concepts
Choice
Shake
Listen

Materials Needed
5 caged bells
5 egg-shaped shakers
CD of your choice (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: One possible source of music is the *World Playground* CD.

Invite mobile infants to an informal gathering with music. Explain that we are going to shake bells and shakers. Move from infant to infant and give each a choice of using one bell or one shaker egg. Present the two items at the same time. Point to each sound-making toy as you describe it.

Allow ample time for each child to make a choice. Describe each infant's choice. Example: "Okay, Darnell, you want a shaker egg."

Use one of the sound-making toys to lead infants in shaking their toys. Example: "Let's shake our bells and eggs and listen to the sound." Point to your ear as you emphasize "listen." Describe each infant's actions. Examples: "Helena is watching." "Brandon is shaking a shaker."

After a brief period of infants shaking their toys, provide recorded music to support infants' shaking of their toys.

What to Look For—Option 3

At this age, infants will show their preference for an item by looking, pointing, touching, or grasping. Some infants may verbalize their preference. Say aloud the infant's preference (or your understanding of the preference). Some infants may prefer to hold a shaker or bell and watch the activity. Other infants may imitate your actions. Encourage all types of participation.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ When you offer the toy choice, pause slightly between the words "egg shaker" and "bell." ■ If an infant does not seem to understand you are offering a choice, restate the choice using different words. ■ Ensure the volume of the recorded music allows infants to hear their sound-making toys.

Enrichment ■ Draw attention to the difference in sounds of a bell and a shaker.

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BLOCK 6

Solving Problems *(continued)*

Cognitive

Interest Area

Materials Needed: dissimilar objects, large blocks and vehicles, red nonbreakable bowl, red pop beads, yellow nonbreakable bowl, yellow balls, pails, scoops

Throughout the week, offer infants two different types of objects and encourage them to select one.

For tummy time with a non-mobile infant, place two dissimilar objects side by side, close to the infant. Examples: One ball and one texture bear, ball and book, book and doll, book and bear, and bear and doll. Each day, change one of the objects.

Put large blocks and large vehicles in a play area. Encourage early mobile infants to get a block or a car. Fill a red, nonbreakable bowl with red pop beads and fill a yellow, nonbreakable bowl with yellow balls. Draw attention to the beads and balls. Sit next to an infant and describe his/her reaction to the play materials.

On a low surface, arrange two dissimilar toys side by side. Talk with mobile infants about the materials and encourage them to choose one or the other. Outdoors, draw attention to making choices. Example: place different-colored pails and scoops in the sandbox.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: two types of manipulative toys, such as bristle blocks and star builders

Offering choices supports cognitive development and shows respect for a child's interests. Toddlers can be easily incorporated into Options 2 or 3. In addition, during playtime describe choices a toddler may make with the materials specified above. Limit the number of possibilities. Too many toys may complicate the issue of choice. If presented with too many playthings, toddlers sometimes remove all the toys from a surface without engaging in focused play.

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BLOCK 6

Focusing and Remembering

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An infant is encouraged to persist in reaching for a toy during tummy time.

Key Concepts
Reach

Materials Needed
3–4 toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Cognitive

Be Prepared: Select toys, such as colorful rattles or caged bells, that you anticipate will appeal to the infant involved in the activity.

BEGIN: [*Arrange several toys on a mat or blanket, keeping 1–2 toys aside. Place the infant on his/her tummy on the blanket or mat about 12 inches from the toys. Sit on the floor, very close to the infant, so he/she can see your face and hear your voice. Position yourself to the side of the infant so that he/she sees the toys when looking straight ahead.*]

ACT: [*Point to the toys in front of the infant.*]

Look at these toys! You can reach for the toys. You can play with the toys.

[*Describe the infant's initial actions. Examples: "Caleb, you are holding your head up and looking at the toys." "You are reaching for the rattle. This is a big job for you!"*

If the infant shows signs of frustration in reaching a toy, offer reassurance with encouraging words and a pat on his/her back. Move one toy closer to the infant so it is easier to reach.

When the infant reaches a toy, enthusiastically acknowledge his/her efforts. Describe the infant's persistence and actions as he/she explores the toy(s). Example: "You sure are interested in the rattle, Natalia! You are working hard to move it around."

Place the remaining 1–2 toys on the mat if it seems the infant would like to explore something different. Place the toys at a reasonable distance that provides the infant a challenging and achievable opportunity to reach for and grasp a toy.

If you anticipate the infant may be interested in continuing to play with a toy from a different position, support the infant's head with one hand and gently help him/her turn over.

After several minutes the infant may be ready for a different activity. Example: "I can see that you are fussing. Are you ready for a different kind of play?"]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you offer a brief summary of the infant's actions. Example: "You saw some interesting toys while you were on your tummy. You worked hard to get a toy. You touched the toy and put it in your mouth. Then you worked hard to get a different toy. You had fun playing with the toys today!"*]

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An infant is encouraged to persist in reaching for a toy from a sitting position.

Key Concepts
Reach

Materials Needed
3–4 toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Cognitive

Be Prepared: Select toys, such as colorful rattles or caged bells, that you anticipate will appeal to the infant involved in the activity. Arrange several of the toys on the floor or on a low table at a reasonable distance from the table edge to provide a challenging and achievable opportunity for the infant to reach for the toys.

Invite an infant to play with the toys you placed on the floor or table. Invite the infant to sit in your lap (for toys placed on a table) or to sit independently on the floor (for toys placed on the floor). The infant should be facing the toys. Hold up and briefly describe each of the toys and encourage the infant to reach for the toys he/she would like to play with. Example: "You are looking at the bells. I think you'd like to play with the bells. You can reach for the bells!" Describe the infant's actions.

Offer verbal assurances that the infant can reach the toy and play with it. Watch for and acknowledge signs of frustration in reaching for a toy and continue to offer reassurances. Example: "I can see you are frustrated. You want the rattle. You can reach it! Keep trying!" Move the desired toy a little closer to the infant if frustration increases or it appears the infant might stop trying to reach it. Describe the situation. Example: "You are feeling frustrated. I will move it closer. You can reach it now!"

When the infant reaches a toy, show enthusiasm for persistence and success. Example: "You wanted to play with the rattle, Antonio. You reached and reached. Now you have the rattle!"

Describe the infant's explorations with the desired toy(s). Example: "You are waving the rattle back and forth. You are listening to the sound the rattle makes! What are you going to do next?"

If the infant starts to lose interest in the desired toy(s), provide several more toys within challenging yet reachable distance for the infant. Transition out of the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest. Acknowledge the infant's persistence during the activity. Example: "You wanted to play with the red rattle. You tried and tried to reach the rattle. Then you did! You picked up the rattle!"

What to Look For—Options 1–2

One of your important roles in this activity is to carefully determine a challenging and reachable distance between the infant and the toys. The need to persist is significantly decreased if the toys are placed too close to the infant. Another important role is to promote persistence in reaching the desired toy(s). Encourage the infant to persist for several moments before moving a toy closer. Avoid handing the infant a toy. Your two-part role, then, is to support the infant's success in reaching the toys while also encouraging

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

persistence during the activity. All infants should experience success in reaching and grasping a toy. Present the activity as a fun game and talk with the infant in a friendly, reassuring manner. Be prepared for infants to explore the toy(s) by touching, mouthing, or shaking.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ At the beginning of the activity, point to or slightly move several of the toys to help draw the infant's attention to the objects. ■ Infants will exhibit more persistence when they are feeling alert and comfortable. Try the activity at a later time if the infant initially does not respond well to this activity. ■ Be sure to individualize your selection of appealing toys. An infant is unlikely to persist in reaching a toy of limited or no interest.

Enrichment ■ Invite a mobile infant to scoot, crawl, or walk toward a favorite toy to play with.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of play materials

Create arrangements of play materials that will be of interest to both non-mobile and mobile infants. Combining play materials in new ways can foster infants' interests and support their emerging abilities in discovery. Place a few toys in a colorful bowl or basket within reach of the infants. Place play materials and books on low surfaces for infants to reach while standing. Sit on the floor with infants and talk with them about their discoveries and persistence in reaching for new toys. Repeat tummy time for young infants to encourage focus and physical development.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: new play props, such as slips of paper for pretend money, boxes and ramps for the cars and trucks, diaper bags with accessories for the dolls, clipboards with paper and markers for the housekeeping area

Provide novel play materials to enhance focus and persistence in familiar play areas. Place new props throughout your setting. Arranging play materials in new and surprising ways is similar to offering a blank canvas for children's imaginations.

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BLOCK 6

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver focused on a teddy bear.

Key Concepts
Look
Wave
Hello
Bye-bye

Materials Needed
Teddy bear

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back on a pillow/cushion so the infant is supported in a reclining position.*

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Good morning, Antonella! I am happy to see you today. Would you like to play with me?" Acknowledge the infant's reactions, including any vocalizations, facial expressions, and/or gestures. Example: "You are looking at me and smiling. I think you want to play!"]

ACT: [*Introduce the teddy bear by holding it about 12 inches from the infant. Move the teddy bear slowly from side to side to attract the infant's attention.*]

Look, I have a special friend with me today!

[*Wave the bear's hand to pretend the bear is saying hello. Use a different voice for the bear. Example: "Hello, Gabriel, hello!"*]

Hello, teddy bear, hello! The teddy bear is waving hello! Do you see the teddy bear waving?

Do you want to wave 'hello' to the teddy bear?

[*Demonstrate waving back to the bear.*

Using your voice, rather than the bear's, describe the infant's response to the bear. Example: "You are kicking your legs! You are watching the teddy bear. Let's see what the teddy bear is going to do next!"

Use the bear to interact with the infant for several moments. Invite the infant to touch the bear. Example (using bear's voice): "I have soft fur. Would you like to touch my hand?" Bring the bear to the infant's hand to touch if the infant seems interested but does not reach or grasp. Describe and respond to any vocalizations or gestures the infant offers during interactions with the bear.

Announce that it is time for the bear to leave.]

It is time for the teddy bear to go bye-bye!

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

[*Wave the bear's hand toward the infant to pretend the bear is saying "bye-bye." Use a different voice for the bear. Example: "Bye-bye, Regina, bye-bye!"*]

The teddy bear is waving bye-bye! Do you see the teddy bear waving?

Do you want to wave bye-bye to the teddy bear?

[*Demonstrate waving back to the bear.*]

Bye-bye, teddy bear, bye-bye!

[*Describe the infant's vocalizations or gestures, paying particular attention to any attempt to wave at the bear. Example: "You are waving your arms. You are saying 'bye-bye' to the teddy bear! Bye-bye teddy bear!"*]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe highlights of the interaction. Example: "We had fun talking to the teddy bear! The teddy bear waved hello! You smiled and watched the teddy bear. You touched the teddy bear's hand. Then the teddy bear waved bye-bye! We waved bye-bye to the teddy bear."*]

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BLOCK 6

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Infants are encouraged to imitate a caregiver's simple actions with a teddy bear.

Key Concepts
Wave
Hello
Bye-bye

Materials Needed
Teddy bears—1 per infant and caregiver

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite several infants to join you to play with teddy bears that are positioned in an appealing way in the activity space. Introduce the bears and encourage infants to wave hello to the bears. Example: "We have some teddy bears to play with today! (Demonstrate waving to the bears.) Hello, teddy bears! Let's all wave hello to the teddy bears!" Encourage the infants to wave hello to the bears.

Give each interested infant a bear. Have the bear wave hello to the infant as you present the bear to an infant. Acknowledge each infant's response to receiving a teddy bear, including any attempt to wave at a bear.

Use a teddy bear to encourage infants to wave to their peers during a simple song you offer. Use a tune of your choice to say "hello" to each infant in the gathering in the following way:

Hello, (child's name).

Hello, (child's name).

Hello, (child's name).

Hello, hello, hello!

Use exaggerated waving motions each time you sing "hello." Infants may wave with their hands or use the arms of their bears.

After the song, encourage infants to play with their bears for several moments. Describe infants' actions and look for opportunities to imitate the actions of the infants with the bears. Example: "Ava is jumping her teddy bear up and down. Let's jump our bears up and down like Ava is!"

Announce that it is time for the bears to say goodbye. As you collect the bears, have each bear wave goodbye to an infant. Encourage infants to wave back to the bears. Acknowledge each infant's attempt to wave at the bears. Example: "Ava is waving bye-bye. Cayden is waving bye-bye. Bye-bye, teddy bears!"

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BLOCK 6

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Infants participate in a book sharing that includes an opportunity to move teddy bears in ways similar to movements described in the book.

Key Concepts
Teddy bear

Move

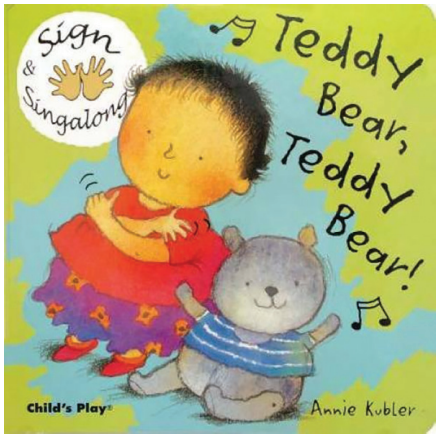
Materials Needed
Sign and Sing Along: Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear! by Annie Kubler

Teddy bears—1 per infant and caregiver

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared : The activity uses the last two pages of the book only (illustrations of different movements). Omit the "turn out the light" action because it illustrates a sign vocabulary not emphasized in today's activity. Select movements you wish to promote with infants in your small gathering. It is not necessary to use each of the illustrated movements.



Invite several infants to join you in looking at pictures of a teddy bear doing different things. Show the last two pages of the book. Give each infant a teddy bear to hold. Position the board book so it can stand on its own, showing the last two pages, so you can use your hands to point to an illustration (such as "touch your nose") and then manipulate your teddy bear to show the illustrated movement. Use simple words to describe actions. As noted in Be Prepared, omit the "turn out the light" illustration.

After you review and demonstrate some teddy bear movements, invite infants to move their teddy bears, too. Example: "We can move our teddy bears like the bear shown in our book." Follow a pattern of pointing to and simply describing an illustration (Example: "Our teddy bear is touching its toes!"), and then encouraging infants to move their bear in a way you demonstrate (Example: "Let's all have our teddy bear touch its toes!"). Some infants may wish to watch rather than imitate your actions. Conclude the activity by briefly describing what happened.

What to Look For—Options 1–3

There are likely to be differences across infants in how they respond to an activity. Example: In Option 1, an infant may show interest in playing with you by gazing, vocalizing, kicking his/her legs, or reaching toward you. Be flexible about each infant's responses to an activity. Some infants may not imitate the hand motions of waving in Option 3 or your demonstrated movements during Option 3. Some infants may move their bodies, rather than their teddy bear, in Option 3. Look for and enthusiastically acknowledge facial expressions or vocalizations that show interest in an activity. Remember that infants who prefer to watch and listen are learning through observation.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Option 3 is more challenging than Option 2 because it potentially involves more ways to move a toy bear and uses book illustrations (in addition to your demonstration) as an example of what to do with a toy bear. It is cognitively helpful for infants to see you demonstrate what is happening in an illustration.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Smile and nod frequently at infants to encourage interactions with you and the teddy bears. ■ In Option 1, pause if an infant signals that he/she needs a break. Watch for a sign (such as looking toward you) that the infant wishes to continue. ■ Positively acknowledge an infant's preference to hold, rather than move, the teddy bear during Options 2 and 3. ■ Open the first segment of Option 3 with two steps: (1) show and describe illustrated movements on the last two pages of the book (while holding the book), and then (2) demonstrate each illustrated action with your own teddy bear, pointing to the illustration before moving your bear.

Enrichment ■ Provide a second teddy bear for the infant to touch and hold during Option 1. ■ Repeat some Option 3 teddy bear movements if infants remain interested, especially movements they seemed to enjoy. ■ Invite infants to move their own bodies with their teddy bears.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several teddy bears or other stuffed animals

Provide opportunities for infants to independently explore the teddy bears. Imitate their actions. Invite infants to imitate the actions of a peer.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Sign and Sing Along: Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear!* by Annie Kubler

Invite toddlers and preschool-age children in your setting to join Option 3. Most or all are likely to be familiar with the teddy bear movements. Invite children to imitate the movements of the teddy bears in the pictures as you read the book. Older children may enjoy reciting some of the words of the rhyme with you.

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BLOCK 6

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An infant manipulates a rattle while lying on his/her tummy or back.

Key Concepts
Reach
Hear
Hold
Shake
Sound

Materials Needed
Rattles—1 per infant and caregiver

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor facing an infant. Place the infant on his/her back if the infant is not able to push up with his/her arms and hold up head/neck.*

Present a rattle to the infant as follows:

If the infant is on his/her back: Hold the rattle near the center of the infant's chest within easy reach of the infant and within the infant's line of vision.

If the infant is on his/her tummy: Place a rattle on the floor directly in front and within reach of the infant.]

This is a rattle. Listen.

[*Gently move the rattle. Point to your ear when you say "hear" below.*]

ASK: Do you <u>hear</u> the sound of your rattle?

ACT: [*Encourage the infant to reach toward the rattle with either hand. Shake the rattle slightly if the infant does not look at the rattle you offer. Do not place the rattle in the infant's hand without first providing a sustained opportunity for the infant to reach for the rattle.*

Invite the infant to shake the rattle soon after he/she begins to hold it.

Describe the infant's actions. Examples: "You <u>reached</u> for the rattle." "You reached for the rattle. Now you are <u>holding</u> the rattle." "You are <u>shaking</u> the rattle. The rattle is making a <u>sound</u>."

Hold the rattle designated for you.]

EXPLAIN: I am moving my rattle. Shake, shake, shake. My rattle is making a <u>sound</u>.

ASK: Can you shake your rattle?

ACT: [*Allow the infant to simply hold or mouth the rattle if he/she likes. Continue to gently shake your rattle and describe what you are doing and the sound you are making. Again ask the infant if he/she would like to shake his/her rattle, too.*

If the infant shakes his/her rattle, copy the infant's movements with his/her rattle and repeat any vocalizations the infant offers. Describe

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

the infant's actions. Example: "(Infant's name), you are shaking your rattle. Your rattle is making a sound. I am shaking my rattle. My rattle is making a sound!"]

I have a song to sing for you. We can shake our rattles together!

[*Sing a "Shake Your Rattle" song. (Tune: "ABCD")*]

[*Move your rattle as described in the song*]

Shake your rattle,
Shake your rattle,
Shake your rattle all around.

Shake your rattle,
Shake your rattle,
Shake your rattle up and down.

Shake your rattle,
Shake your rattle,
Shake your rattle all around.

RECAP: You are learning how to shake a rattle.

[*Describe the infant's actions. Examples: "You had fun watching me shake my rattle. You heard my rattle make a sound." "You had fun shaking your rattle. You moved your rattle. Your rattle made a sound."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

Be attentive to the infant's reactions to the rattle sound. Gentle movement (quiet sound) of the rattle is often best. The infant may turn away or fuss if the sound is displeasing. Reintroduce the rattle with a gentle shake. If the infant continues to turn away or fuss, move to a different activity.

Some infants may be uninterested in the rattle-shaking movements included in the "Shake Your Rattle" song (up and down, all around). Be careful that the song does not become a "do what I do" pattern. The intent is to have a pleasurable time while drawing attention to the infant's manipulation of an object. The infant may be quite content simply holding and perhaps exploring the rattle, not shaking the rattle. Adjust the activity to accommodate the infant's interest.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If the infant has a favorite sound-making item he/she likes to hold, provide the favored object instead of a rattle and encourage the infant to move it or shake it. The goal of the activity is to promote an infant's manipulation of an object. The object does not need to be a rattle. ■ Make sure the rattle (or other object) is an appropriate size for the infant to grasp and hold. ■ If an infant drops or throws his/her rattle, pick it up and, with a gentle shake, offer it again to the infant. If the infant continues to drop or throw his/her rattle, move to a different activity and return to the use of the rattle at a later time. ■ If the infant shows interest in touching or holding the rattle, but has difficulty holding it, help the infant hold the rattle so he/she can feel the rattle. Describe the infant's exploration of the rattle. ■ Sing fewer verses of the suggested "Shake Your Rattle" song if the infant loses interest.

Enrichment ■ Offer your rattle or a second rattle to the infant (one for each hand) if the infant can readily hold and manipulate one rattle and is excited about the activity.

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BLOCK 6

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An infant manipulates a bell while sitting independently or with support.

Key Concepts
Reach
Hold
Shake

Materials Needed
2 bells—1 per infant and caregiver

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language

Sit on the floor facing an infant who can sit with support or alone. Make sure the activity space is free of toys on all sides. Gently shake a bell. Describe what the bell looks like (such as its color) and the noise it makes when you shake it. Describe what you are doing. Example: "I am moving the bell. Shake, shake, shake. The bell is making a sound."

Hold out the bell near the center of the infant's chest to encourage the infant to reach one hand to his/her midline. Encourage the infant to grasp the bell with either hand. Watch and describe the infant's movements. Example: "You are holding a bell."

Encourage the infant to shake his/her bell. Draw attention to the infant's manipulation of the rattle. Example: "You are shaking your rattle. You are making a sound with your rattle." Emphasize changes the infant may make in his/her shaking action. Example: "You were shaking your bell up and down. Now you are shaking your bell from side to side."

Use the second bell to imitate the infant's actions. Describe your actions. Example: "I am shaking my bell, just like you are shaking your bell. We are shaking our bells in the same way." You may wish to change your bell motion if the infant seems to be following your lead with shaking actions. Describe your motions with your bell and the infant's motions with his/her bell.

Sing a song that includes the infant's name. The following example may be sung to the tune of "The Wheels on the Bus."

Rian, Rian rings his/her bell,
Rings his/her bell.
Rian, Rian rings his/her bell,
All around the town.

What to Look For—Option 2

Being able to sit well-balanced (a gross motor skill) gives support to manipulating an object (a fine motor skill). In addition to the ease of manipulating a toy, sitting comfortably enables an infant to explore an object for a longer period than an infant who manipulates a toy while lying on his/her tummy or back. Still, an infant who has mastered sitting may occasionally topple over.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

An infant may shake the bell and explore it by tapping it on the floor and bringing it to his/her mouth.

At this age, an infant may be increasingly interested in your words and actions. Look for opportunities to respond to and describe the infant's vocalizations and actions. Incorporating your own special touch to the activity, such as singing a song of your creation, adds interest for the infant. This activity can be easily adapted to accommodate several infants.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Move closer to the infant to provide appropriate assistance with sitting if the infant seems unsure of his/her balance. ■ If the infant mouths the bell, wait a moment and then shake your bell again. Invite the infant to shake his/her bell with you. Say "Let's shake our bells together." Shake your bell in the infant's line of vision.

Enrichment ■ Invite the child to stand and ring his/her bell. Incorporate standing into your song. Example: "Rian stands and rings his/her bell, rings his/her bell. Rian stands and rings his/her bell, all around the town."

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: hanging toys; sound makers, such as rattles, bells, rings with beads

Infants enjoy variety in the play space. Create a play space for non-mobile infants to explore developing movements. Change the hanging toys over time and place toys within reach of infants who are on the floor. Infants who are able to roll over will enjoy seeing toys just beyond their reach.

For early mobile infants, gather an assortment of rattles and bells along with other sound-making toys, such as rings with beads inside. Arrange bells and rattles where infants can discover them. Sit nearby and talk with infants about how we can make a sound by moving the toy.

Find a place in your room to suspend sound makers. Infants who stand will enjoy moving bells and rattles attached to a railing. Walking infants may enjoy carrying a bell. Encourage an infant to show you the bell! Celebrate infants' current skills.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: rattle or sound-making toy

Toddlers may wish to join one-to-one activities focused on shaking a rattle. Provide a rattle or sound-making toy for each toddler who participates. If older children in your setting seem interested in your activity with an infant, provide each child an opportunity to manipulate a sound-making toy in an informal gathering. You might wish to call your informal gathering a band. Different types of movements with the toy (up and down, side to side) and different sound levels (quiet, louder) could be emphasized. Older children also could be invited to make or talk about the types of sounds each of the following would make if they joined your band: cricket, rooster, butterflies, ducks, honeybees.

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BLOCK 7 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to the caregiver's voice and communicating about pictures of baby faces.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of baby faces.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book and communicate about pictures of baby faces.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) An infant explores two similar toys with opportunities to notice differences between the toys.

Option 2 (OO) An infant plays with toys that differ in size.

Option 3 (IG) Infants explore different types of rings and balls, including ways to arrange the objects.

Self-Regulation

Paying Attention

Option 1 (OO) A young infant watches the movements of a puppet manipulated by a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant watches and manipulates a puppet with a caregiver.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver using a toy car.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in open-ended toy car play with a caregiver, with opportunities to imitate each other's actions with the toys.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants participate together in open-ended play with toy cars, with opportunities to notice and imitate the actions of others.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) An infant visually explores the room from a secure sitting position in a caregiver's lap.

Option 2 (IG) Infants who can sit independently practice balancing their bodies in a sitting position while extending their arms to pretend to feed a hungry puppet.

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

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BLOCK 7

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to the caregiver's voice and communicating about pictures of baby faces.

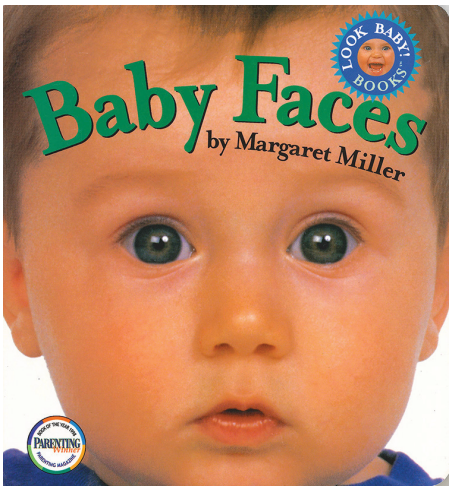
Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Baby Faces by Margaret Miller

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm so your hands can hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

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



ACT: I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the baby?

[*Pause for and acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the picture of a baby, Aiden. You are smiling at the picture!"*]

There are pictures of baby faces in our book. Let's open the book and see what's on the next page!

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

- *Point to and describe pictures. Examples: "See this baby? (Point to nose.) She is scrunching up her nose! I think she is smelling something stinky!" "Look at this baby! He is sticking his tongue out! I wonder why he is making this silly face."*
- *Describe the infant's reactions to pictures. Example: "You are smiling at this baby. The baby is smiling just like you are!" (Point to baby's mouth.)*
- *Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You made a happy sound, Damion! I think you like this picture of the baby!"*
- *Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book sharing.*]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book together. Our book had pictures of baby faces. You smiled and kicked your legs when you looked at the happy baby. This was a fun book to read together!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

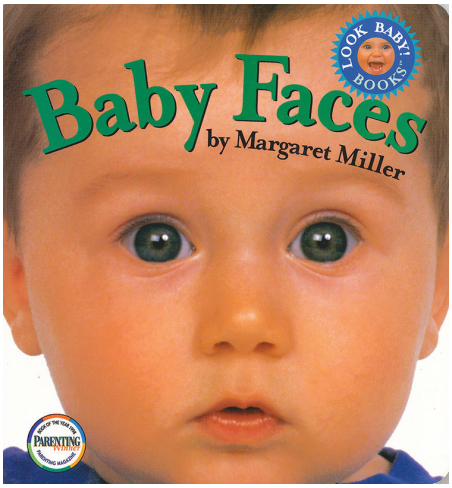
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of baby faces.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Baby Faces by Margaret Miller

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to read a book with you. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "This is a picture of a baby. Our book is about baby faces." Use strategies, such as the following, to engage the infant with the book:



- Encourage the infant to help you turn the book's pages.
- Point to and name pictured objects. Example: "Look at this baby. Do you see her tongue? The baby is making a silly face!"
- Describe what the infant looks at. Example: "You are looking at the sad baby. The baby looks like she is crying. The baby has tears and a sad mouth."
- Spend more time talking about pictures that appear to be of interest to the infant.
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are sticking out your tongue! You are looking at the baby with his tongue out. You are doing the same as the baby in our book. You both have your tongues out!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "You are touching the eyes of the baby in our book. Where are your eyes? Let's find them!"
- Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment. Example: Make a sad face and use a sad voice to describe a picture of a baby with a sad expression.
- Follow the infant's cues about the preferred pace of looking at and talking about pictures.

Conclude the session by recognizing the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Talia. You looked at the pictures of the babies. You stuck your tongue out, just like the silly baby. You helped me turn the pages! I think you liked this book."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

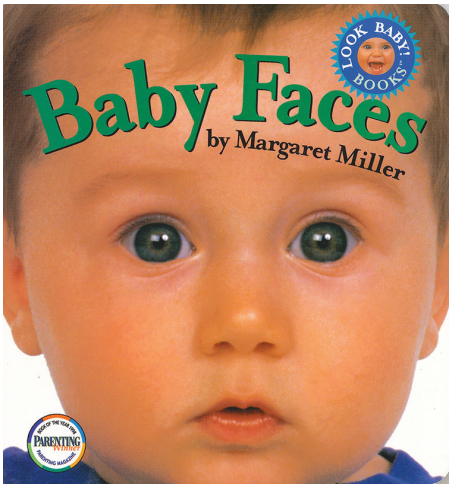
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book and communicate about pictures of baby faces.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Baby Faces by Margaret Miller

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or prefer to stand close while you talk about book illustrations. Invite the infant to hold the book and turn the pages. Provide assistance, if needed, by keeping all the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.



Explain that our book is about the faces of babies. We can look at pictures of babies and talk about what they look like. Use strategies, such as the following, to engage the infant with the book:

- Point to and provide names (or invite the infant to provide names) of pictured items. Example: "These are the baby's eyes. Here is one eye. Here is another eye."
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you name. Example: "The baby has a nose. Where is the baby's nose? You can point to the baby's nose!"
- Spend more time talking about pictures that seem to be of interest to the infant. Example: "You are pointing to the baby with her eyes closed. The word on our page says 'yucky.' The baby is making a yucky face! I wonder what the baby thinks is yucky."
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'uh oh!' The words in the book say 'uh oh!' You said the words with me!"
- Help the infant connect book information to their experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "This baby says 'yum-yum!' The baby ate something that was yummy. You liked the strawberries we had for breakfast, Zachary. You thought the strawberries were yummy!"
- Read and talk about the pictures with enthusiasm. Accentuate words or characters by using different voices and facial expressions. Example: Crinkle your nose when describing a picture of the baby who seems to smell something stinky. "Ooh, 'stinky' says the baby!"
- Follow the infant's cues as to how quickly or slowly he/she wishes to turn the pages. It is not necessary to look at all pictures.

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

Conclude the session by recognizing the infant's participation. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Jacob. You pointed to pictures in our book. You turned the pages to see the next baby face! We had fun reading this book together."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Infants will likely delight in looking at the pictures of baby faces. Look for instances of the infant gazing, pointing, touching, or using his/her hands to bat at or tap the pictures. Infants may also express interest in the book by vocalizing, including cooing, babbling, or word-like sounds. Very young infants are developing the ability to focus on pictures and may be more interested in the sound of your voice as you read and talk about pictures. Older infants may imitate your sounds and/or intonation as you read and actively point to pictures. With all ages, you may return to particular pictures or pages that seem to be of interest to the infant.

If the infant seems to lose interest in the book, you may wish to offer one gentle attempt to interest the infant in a picture before ending the activity. Example: "Let's look at the baby on the next page!" Some book sharing activities will be longer than others. It also is helpful to recognize the infant's shift away from the book. Example: "I can see you are squirming away from the book. I don't think you want to read our book right now, Amelia. I can hold you or we can find another activity."

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Have another object available for infants to mouth or chew instead of the book. ■ Help an infant focus on a picture by pointing to and naming specific aspects of the picture. Example: "Here is the baby's hair. Here are the baby's eyes."

Enrichment ■ Provide an object or prop related to the book for the infant to hold during or after the book sharing. While reading *Baby Faces*, young infants may enjoy holding a baby doll. Older infants may enjoy looking at their reflection in a mirror after the story. ■ Imitate the faces of the babies in the book. Hold the corresponding face picture close to your face. Example: "I am making a silly face. The baby is making a silly face. We are both silly!"

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of age-appropriate books

Place an assortment of books in a special, familiar place for infants to explore. Infants may manipulate the books by patting, turning, sucking, or chewing. Provide soft cloth or vinyl books in addition to board books. Older infants will enjoy chunky board books with pages that are easier to grasp and turn.

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Baby Faces* by Margaret Miller

Children of all ages enjoy looking at faces of other children. As part of Option 2 or 3, invite toddlers and older children to imitate the faces of babies shown in the book. Talk about some of the simple expressions shown in the pictures.

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BLOCK 7

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant explores two similar toys with opportunities to notice differences between the toys.

Key Concepts
Soft

Hard

Materials Needed
Soft round rattle—1 per infant and caregiver

Cylinder-shaped hard rattle—1 per infant and caregiver

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Begin the activity when the infant is sitting comfortably. Hold on your lap an infant who cannot securely sit alone.*]

EXPLAIN: [*Give the infant one hard cylinder-shaped rattle.*]

Let's play with these rattles. Here is one rattle for you. Here is one rattle for me.

[*If the infant does not grasp the rattle, hold the rattle near the infant so he/she can touch it. You may wish to lightly touch the infant's hand with the rattle.*

Pause for the infant to respond by touching or manipulating the rattle, looking at you, and/or vocalizing. Acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the rattle."]

ACT: [*Describe the infant's exploration of the rattle. Examples: "You are putting the rattle to your mouth." "You are feeling the rattle with your fingers."*

Point to and describe rattle characteristics the infant seems to be exploring. Examples: "We can feel little bumps on our rattle." "We can shake our rattle and make a sound."]

Here is a different rattle.

[*Hold the soft, ball-shaped rattle near the infant's chest. Encourage the infant to touch or take the rattle. The infant may drop the hard rattle in order to grasp the soft rattle, or reach for the soft rattle with his/her other hand.*

Point to and describe 1–2 characteristics of the rattle the infant seems to be exploring. Examples: "This rattle is very soft. You can squeeze it with your hands." "We can hear a little bell when you shake the rattle. We cannot see the bell."

Describe the infant's actions with the rattle(s).

Offer an opportunity for the infant to explore two different rattles positioned near each other. The infant already may be holding two different rattles, or you may be able to hold one rattle within the infant's reach while the infant is holding a different rattle.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

Point to and describe a difference between the rattles. Encourage the infant to feel the differences. Examples: "This rattle is soft. You can squeeze this rattle. Our other rattle is hard." "This rattle has bumps. This rattle is smooth."]

RECAP: [*Describe the infant's exploration of the rattles. Emphasize differences the infant may have noticed. Show rattle features you describe. Example: "You played with two rattles. One rattle was soft. One rattle was hard. The rattles made a sound when you shook them."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

Infants are likely to explore the rattles by looking, touching, moving, and mouthing. Repeated, active exploration helps infants develop an understanding of an object.

Tailor your description of rattles to the infant's exploration. Your description of rattle characteristics will be more meaningful to the infant if you describe and point to features that the infant is exploring rather than offer a planned presentation of rattle characteristics. Differences you describe should be in response to the infant's interests.

Infants will not be familiar with many or most of the words you use to describe rattle characteristics. Young children learn words through repeated exposure to a word. It is very important to point to a rattle feature you are describing (and the infant is exploring). You may wish to mention a rattle's color, but keep in mind that at this age, infants are not expected to know colors.

If an infant's focus on the rattles is interrupted by something and the infant does not shift attention back to the rattles within a few seconds, invite a continuation of rattle play by talking to the infant and giving the rattles a little shake.

A walking infant may grasp a rattle(s) and carry it away. Stay with the walking infant and continue the activity when the infant stops or sits. If an infant throws the round rattle, it may be he/she views the rattle as a ball.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If the infant shows little interest in the rattles, select two different objects for the infant to explore. Infants at this age are learning differences between objects and are not expected to sort them. ■ For an infant who prefers to stand, move the rattles to a low surface the infant can easily reach. ■ Use your rattle to point to and describe things that the infant is exploring with his/her rattle.

Enrichment ■ For an infant whose interest is high, arrange all four rattles where he/she can easily reach them. Encourage the infant to take a rattle. Watch and describe the infant's action. Examples: "You picked up two round rattles." "You picked up one long rattle and one round rattle."

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant plays with toys that differ in size.

Key Concepts
Big
Little
In
Out
Truck

Materials Needed
1 large toy truck (see Be Prepared)
2 soft toys of different sizes

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: The toy truck should be large enough to hold two toys, as shown. The activity description assumes the two toys are soft bears of different sizes.

Invite an infant to join you in playing with two bears and a truck. Begin the activity with the bears in the dump box of the truck and invite the infant to take the two bears from the truck. Emphasize the words big and little as you and the infant play with the bears.

Through a playful interaction with the infant, also introduce the idea the bears go in and out of the truck. Encourage an infant to put the bears in the dump box of the toy truck. Some infants may enjoy making a truck sound.

Observe the infant's reaction to the play materials and focus on what is most interesting to him/her. Allow the infant to lead the play. Infants may show interest in different aspects of items, such as hugging or manipulating the bear toys, moving the bears in and out of the truck, manipulating the dump box on the truck, turning the wheels of the toy truck, and/or pushing the toy truck, with or without the bears.

Describe the infant's actions. Use simple sentences as you emphasize key words in, out, big, and little. Example: "You put big bear in the truck!"

What to Look For—Option 2

Infants may respond to the terms "mommy" or "daddy" to represent the larger bear. "Little" and "baby" may be used to describe the smaller bear. It is not important for an infant to say the words big and little, but hearing the terms while seeing the differences can help the infant begin to understand this distinction.

Be prepared to extend the activity to include other interested mobile infants by having similar toys close at hand. You may shift your attention to a second child when the activity ends. You can simply state "Bree is here to play. Let's look at her toys."

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Demonstrate putting one bear into the truck. Encourage the infant to put the other bear into the truck. ■ If the infant begins pushing the truck out of the activity area, follow along to maintain the play interaction.

Enrichment ■ Add a prop to represent food. Pretend to give food to the bears.

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BLOCK 7

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

Infants explore different types of rings and balls, including ways to arrange the objects.

Key Concepts
Ball

Ring

Materials Needed
Cloth bag (see Be Prepared)

Balls with distinct differences—1 per infant

Stacking rings—1 per infant

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Collect rings from stacking ring toys and small balls that have observable differences, such as an O-ball, which has bumps or ridges an infant can feel. Place all the toys into a cloth bag. If possible, prepare for each infant one bag that contains one ball and one ring.

Sit on the floor next to 2–3 infants and present the bag(s). Peek into the bag as if it contains a surprise. Give each infant an opportunity to remove 1–2 toy(s) from the bag. Seeing familiar play materials appear in a novel manner may foster curiosity. Use facial expressions and voice inflections to communicate your pleasure in the infants' explorations. Example: "Charles, you got a ball from our bag!"

Make sure each infant has one ring and one ball without taking any toys away from an infant. Talk about characteristics of the balls and the rings. Remember that at this age infants are not expected to learn color names.

The assortment of balls and rings offers multiple opportunities to explore. Infants may roll a ball, peek through the hole in a ring, put a ball on top of a ring, or put a toy into the bag. Although infants are not expected to sort items, some infants may form groups of balls and/or rings.

Support each infant's interest in the play materials by pointing and describing each item. Example: "You have a big ring. Here is a little ring." Talk about the way each infant is exploring the materials.

What to Look For—Option 3

Some infants may participate for several minutes and some infants will leave the activity sooner. Some infants may explore the objects by mouthing them. The interest and enthusiasm you demonstrate during the activity will foster exploration and participation. Use clearly spoken words to talk about each infant's interests. Think of yourself as the announcer of the various strategies the infants explore. Over time, infants will begin to associate words with the balls and rings.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Place a ball on a ring (as pictured above in this plan) if infants seem uncertain about how to explore the objects. Encourage infants to remove the ball from the ring, to emphasize there are two (not one) objects.

Enrichment ■ Use the ring as a pretend hat for the ball, especially as a contrast to placing a ball on a ring.

Interest Area

Materials needed: Sets of similar but not identical toys, as described below. Board books displayed on a shelf and books in baskets in several areas of the room are important. Plan to have at least three books per child in your group.

For non-mobile infants, provide several balls with different textures and describe how the balls feel as you sit and play with an infant(s).

For early mobile infants, display play materials that are similar but different, such as two balls and two animal figures made of different materials in different areas of the room. Infants may wish to play again with the Option 3 items.

Place several items of different shapes and textures into a basket for crawling and walking infants to explore. Contrasting item possibilities include a washcloth, a square of a light silky fabric, and a square of denim or corduroy. Encourage mobile infants to cover soft bears with the cloth squares.

Family Child Care

Materials needed: rattles; soft and rigid animals and people figures; bag with matching objects; such as two small animal figures, two small blocks, two spoons, and/or two small socks

You may find time to again present the Option 1 rattles to an infant who is seated in a high chair before or after a meal or snack. Toddlers will enjoy exploring a variety of soft and hard objects in a basket. Provide soft and rigid animals and people figures. Talk with toddlers about the similarities and differences. Preschool-age children may enjoy reaching into a bag and finding two matching objects using the sense of touch only. Items for the bag could include two small animal figures, two small blocks, two spoons, and/or two small socks.

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BLOCK 7

Paying Attention

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

A young infant watches the movements of a puppet manipulated by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch
Touch
Feel

Materials Needed
1 hand puppet

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

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

Hold the puppet about 12 inches from the infant and begin moving it slightly from side to side.]

ACT: The name of our puppet is (name of puppet).

[*Pause for and acknowledge the infant's response. Describe any visual attention the infant gives to the toy. Example: "I see you are watching our tiger puppet, Juan. Our tiger puppet is moving back and forth."*

Move the puppet a little farther to one side and back toward the infant's middle. Describe the infant's response. Example: "You are moving your eyes. You are watching the puppet move."

If the infant maintains a visual focus on the puppet, move it closer to the infant and move the puppet's head to say hello to the infant. Example: "Hello, Juan. I am a little tiger. Do you see me?"

Slowly move the puppet toward the infant's middle. Describe your actions. Example: "I am moving the tiger so you can touch it." Invite the infant to touch or grasp the puppet. If the infant is not able to grasp the item, hold it near the infant's hands so he/she can touch and feel it. Use the following strategies to support the infant's attention to the puppet:

- *Describe the infant's actions with the puppet. Example: "You are reaching out and touching the tiger."*
- *Describe some characteristics of the puppet. Example: "The tiger feels soft and furry! Let's touch it."*
- *Acknowledge infant vocalizations. Example: "I hear you talking. You are cooing. I think you like the tiger puppet!"*

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest, such as looking elsewhere.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you describe what happened. Example: "We watched the tiger puppet today. The tiger said hello! You watched the tiger go back and forth. You smiled when you touched the tiger's soft fur."*]

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BLOCK 7

Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

An older infant watches and manipulates a puppet with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch
Touch
Hold

Materials Needed
1 hand puppet

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit with you and a puppet on the floor. Sit facing the infant with a smile and introduce the puppet. Hold the puppet in front of the infant and pretend to make the puppet walk slowly from side to side. Encourage the infant to watch the puppet move for a few moments. Example: "You are watching our tiger puppet. You are moving your eyes to watch our puppet." Move the puppet's head to say hello to the infant.

Invite the infant to reach for and move the puppet. Example: "Now it is your turn to play with our tiger puppet. Would you like to touch it?" Encourage the infant to move the puppet around. Describe the puppet's movements and the infant's actions to move the puppet. Example: "You are holding the tiger puppet with your hands and moving the puppet up and down. You are watching the puppet move around."

Conclude the activity by describing the infant's focus on the puppet. Example: "You watched the tiger puppet walk back and forth. Then you held the puppet and made it move up and down. You used your eyes to watch our puppet."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Most infants will enjoy watching you move the puppet. Carefully monitor the infant's reactions (especially his/her gaze) to determine how much to move the puppet and when it is time to conclude the activity. The activity may run less than a minute with some infants. Acknowledge the infant's efforts to concentrate on the puppet. Some infants may prefer to hold and look at the puppet. Fully recognize this important way to concentrate on an object.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Support an infant's attention to the puppet by bringing the puppet closer to the infant and using slower movements. Repeat a simple movement, such as gently touching the infant's toes with the puppet, moving it away (while still in view), and then bringing it back. Describe your actions and how the infant is paying attention. ■ If the infant appears to be uncomfortable with a puppet, use a familiar stuffed toy that is likely to be a pleasant experience for the infant to watch and perhaps manipulate.

Enrichment ■ Provide two puppets for the infant to watch and manipulate.

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Paying Attention *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several stuffed animals

Incorporate Option 1 or 2 into infants' floor time. Support infants' concentration on a puppet by describing your actions and actions of others with a puppet. Give each infant an animal to touch and hold. Older infants may enjoy moving their puppet along with you. Talk with infants about their actions and responses.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several simple hand puppets and stuffed animals

Children of all ages enjoy watching puppets. Use a hand puppet to read a familiar book to the group. After the story, invite the older children to use the puppets to help tell the story. Younger toddlers and infants can participate by holding their own puppet or stuffed animal. Younger children will enjoy watching the puppet show.

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BLOCK 7

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver using a toy car.

Key Concepts
Look

Car

Materials Needed
Toy car

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her tummy on a blanket or mat in front of you. Sit on the floor very close to the infant so he/she can see your face and hear your voice.*]

ACT: [*Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Hello, Catalina! I am happy you are here today. You look ready to play! Acknowledge the infant's reactions, including vocalizations, facial expressions, or gestures.*]

[*Place the toy car in front of the infant.*]

Here is a car. Look, the car has wheels that move.

[*Pause for the infant to respond.*

Slowly drive the car back and forth in front of the infant.]

Our car can drive. Vroom, vroom.

Would you like to touch the car?

[*Encourage the infant to touch and explore the car. Describe the infant's reactions to the toy. Examples: "Your eyes got wide when you saw the car. Your eyes are following the driving car!" "You reached for the car, Leon. I moved it closer. Now you are holding it!" "You are holding the car. You are touching the wheels on our car. There are four wheels. The wheels turn around and around! You are looking at the wheels go around."*

Continue interacting with the infant as he/she explores the car. Wrap up the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of the interaction. Example: "We had fun with our toy car today! You watched me drive the car. Then you reached for the car! You touched the wheels. Thank you for sharing time with me, Elizabeth!"*]

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant participates in open-ended toy car play with a caregiver, with opportunities to imitate each other's actions with the toys.

Key Concepts
Look

Car

Materials Needed
2 toy cars

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite an infant to join you in playing with toy cars. Introduce the cars and give one to the infant to hold and explore. Example: "I have two cars for us to play with! Which car would you like to play with?"

Describe the infant's actions with the car. Look for opportunities to imitate the actions of the infant. Example: "You are driving the car in the air, Liam. I am driving my car in the air too! Where are the cars going?"

If the infant pauses to watch your actions with a car, demonstrate a way to interact with the toy that has not been part of the current play. Example: Pull the car back and then gently push it forward. Encourage the infant to imitate your actions. Example: "Look at my car go! Let's pull our cars back, like this. Watch! Vroom, vroom! There go our cars!"

Continue to encourage imitation (yours and/or the infant's) with car play. Remember to pause for the infant to respond to your words and to the activity itself.

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BLOCK 7

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Older infants participate together in open-ended play with toy cars, with opportunities to notice and imitate the actions of others.

Key Concepts
Look
Car
Drive

Materials Needed
Toy cars—1–2 per infant

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite several infants to play on the floor with you. Place the toy cars in front of the infants and invite each to select a car to play with. You may wish to provide more cars than infants to avoid conflict over specific cars. Keep a car for you to play with. Encourage infants to interact with the cars. As the infants play, watch for opportunities to draw attention to infants' actions and to suggest imitation. Examples: "Look, Jada is driving her car on the floor. Vroom, vroom goes Jada's car! Let's all drive our cars on the floor like Jada. Vroom, vroom!"

Continue to describe the infants' actions with the cars, encouraging imitation behaviors. Acknowledge efforts to imitate your actions or those of another.

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Infants will differ in their awareness of your attention and the actions of others with a toy car. Some may enjoy exploring a toy car independent of you or others, whereas other infants may watch and perhaps imitate another. In Option 3, some infants may enjoy holding a car while watching you or their peers play. Remain flexible about the type and length of infant participation. The toy car is simply a means toward connections with others. Use a different type of toy if a car is of limited interest to an infant(s).

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ In Option 1, adjust the infant's tummy position if you observe signs of discomfort or fussiness. ■ Acknowledge an infant's preference to hold rather than manipulate a car. Observing others is a valuable way to learn.

Enrichment ■ Provide another type of toy car for an infant(s) to explore.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of toy cars

Provide opportunities for infants to explore the cars during floor time. Play alongside the infants and describe their actions with the cars, as well as your own. Encourage imitation as the infants play by imitating their actions and inviting them to imitate yours. Invite infants to imitate the actions of a peer.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of toy cars—1 per child

Invite older children in your care to participate in an imitation game with toy cars or other types of desirable toys. Invite one child at a time to be the leader of the game. Invite the leader to drive his/her car on different appropriate surfaces. Encourage others to follow the leader. Infants may enjoy holding a car and being held while watching others.

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BLOCK 7

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An infant visually explores the room from a secure sitting position in a caregiver's lap.

Key Concepts
Sitting
Looking

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional

Optional Reading
Baby Faces by DK Publishing

BEGIN: [*Hold an infant securely on your lap in a comfortable chair. Support the infant's neck and back with your body while ensuring infant can freely move his/her arms.*]

EXPLAIN: [*Explain to the infant that you are holding him/her so we can look around the room. Example: "Diego, I am holding you in my lap so we can look at things in our room."*]

ACT: [*Describe parts of the room to the infant, including descriptions of the actions of other caregivers and infants. Shift your body so the infant has a direct look at specific parts of the room. Offer pauses for the infant to react to what he/she hears and sees.*

If the infant does not seem interested in looking at parts of the room, hold a colorful toy for the infant to see. Talk about the toy. Move the toy close to the infant and encourage him/her to touch the toy. Move the toy away from the infant and then slowly back to his/her mid-line. Touch the infant's toes and fingers with the toy in a playful manner.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened. Example: "You sat on my lap. We looked around our room. You are getting stronger and can see things in a different way."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

At about 3–4 months, an infant may begin to hold his/her head up without support. It is not uncommon for an infant to wobble slightly as you support a sitting experience. Maintain your focus on the infant at all times. The infant may be mostly focused on the feeling of sitting. Some infants may be interested in looking. The period of time the infant sits with your support may vary from 30 seconds to 3–4 minutes.

Look carefully for an indication that the infant wants a shift in position. The infant's muscles may begin to tighten and/or the infant may vocalize discomfort. At any signal of distress, respond to the infant by repositioning him/her and offering comfort if needed. A slight rocking motion is often comforting to an infant. An infant may feel tired or quite stimulated by a sitting experience. Provide soothing support to help the infant return to a calm, alert state, if needed. With repeated daily practice, the infant will gain balance and strength in his/her neck, back, and other muscles of the torso (core).

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ The infant may want assurances he/she is safe. In addition to your comments, turn the infant slightly toward you in a comfortable holding position.

Enrichment ■ For a few seconds, hold the infant so his/her back and neck are no longer resting against you. Use your voice to offer reassurance and encouragement. ■ If the infant seems interested in a particular aspect of your room, stand and walk with the infant held securely in your arms for a closer look and description.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

Infants who can sit independently practice balancing their bodies in a sitting position while extending their arms to pretend to feed a hungry puppet.

Key Concepts
Reach

Materials Needed
1 puppet

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional
Self-Regulation

Introduce several infants to a friendly and hungry puppet! Demonstrate how to feed the puppet. Then encourage the infants, one at a time, to hold their arms out from their bodies to feed the puppet. Begin with an infant who seems especially eager to feed the hungry puppet. Add a fun challenge by having the puppet tell a mobile infant "I cannot reach the food. Can you hold it up higher?" Encourage the infants to reach toward the puppet. Infants may also enjoy offering a toy for the puppet to play with. See Extra Support tips for alternatives to a puppet and/or feeding a hungry puppet.

What to Look For—Option 2

Pretending to feed the hungry puppet is a way for infants to practice balancing their bodies in a sitting position while also extending their arms. Some infants may feel uncertain about feeding or touching the puppet. Hold the puppet still for an infant who seems unsure about feeding the puppet. Suggest the infant pat or pet (instead of feed) the puppet if it appears the infant does not wish to feed the puppet (see Extra Support tip). Some infants may be more comfortable with a familiar soft animal, such as a teddy bear or doll, instead of a puppet. What is important about the activity is the infant's practice in balancing his/her body in a sitting position while moving his/her arms.

Infants generally enjoy pretending to engage in basic care routines, such as feeding. At a young age, infants often try to put things on their parent's mouth, and may need a reminder (including a demonstration) that the puppet is hungry. Wait until the infants are confident with the puppet to add exaggerated puppet actions. If infants get very excited about the puppet, change the tone of the activity by using a quieter voice for the puppet and moving it slowly.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Bring the puppet closer to the infant's hand. Open the puppet's mouth wide for the infant to pretend to feed it. ■ To encourage an infant to pat (rather than feed) the puppet, move closer to the infant and place an open hand in front of the infant's chest. Invite the infant to pat your hand. Then use the puppet to demonstrate a pat.

Enrichment ■ Hold the puppet up higher to encourage the infant to reach higher to feed the puppet pretend food. Hold the puppet lower for the infant to reach down low to feed the puppet.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: art cards, small container, animal figure, balls, stacking cup, shape sorter, mailing tube

Create interesting arrangements for infants to see as they lay on their backs in a play area. Infants enjoy looking at faces and at contrasts between light and dark. Use art cards to add interest to the area designed for non-mobile infants.

For early mobile infants, select two types of toys for a special play area. Stacking cups with toys inside are fun to explore. Use a small container to cover an animal figure. Infants will enjoy discovering the toy!

Infants who crawl and walk enjoy finding surprises to manipulate, such as a ball inside a stacking cup. Place toys at different levels for crawling and walking infants to discover.

For infants who stand or walk, provide toys to drop into containers, such as a potato chip container and balls. Infants will also enjoy playing with a small ball that fits through a mailing tube.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: small boxes, newspaper, tape

Extend Option 2 balancing practice to young toddlers by providing small boxes that are empty or stuffed with newspaper. Tape the boxes closed. Toddlers will enjoy passing the boxes to one another while seated near one another and/or carrying the small boxes from place to place.

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BLOCK 8 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a repetitive, simple *Peekaboo* game with a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant participates with a caregiver in a repetitive *Peekaboo* game using a scarf.

Cognitive

Exploring Textures

Option 1 (OO) A young infant looks at and/or touches similar toys with different textures.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant touches and manipulates two different types of initially connected objects.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants touch and manipulate two types of objects with highly different textures.

Self-Regulation

Getting Calm

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while being held in a caregiver's arms.

Option 2 (OO) An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while sitting on a caregiver's lap.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while sitting independently, facing a caregiver.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant and caregiver play together with a musical toy, with opportunity to engage in back-and-forth interactions.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant participates in back-and-forth interactions with a caregiver focused on playing a musical toy.

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (OO) A young infant watches a caregiver manipulate toys with opportunities, for the infant to grasp and hold a toy.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices releasing an infant snap-lock bead.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants together practice picking up and releasing infant snap-lock beads, including dropping beads into a small container.

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

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BLOCK 8

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a repetitive, simple *Peekaboo* game with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Game
Peekaboo

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Optional Reading
Eyes, Nose, Toes Peekaboo! by DK Publishing

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a comfortable reclining position. Ensure the infant can clearly see you. Smile and encourage the infant to make eye contact with you.*]

EXPLAIN: Would you like to play a game with me? Our game is called *Peekaboo*! I think you will like this game.

[*Pause and watch for the infant's response.*

The young infant may show interest in the activity by smiling, kicking his/her legs, reaching, vocalizing, or making eye contact. Describe the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at me. You are smiling! I think you are ready for our game."]

ACT: I am going to cover my face, like this.

[*Place your hands loosely over your eyes, ensuring the majority of your face is showing.*]

Where am I? Do you see me?

[*With enthusiasm, remove your hands to reveal the rest of your face.*]

Peekaboo! Here I am!

[*Describe the infant's reaction to the game, including any gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are smiling and cooing! You watched me hide my face. Then you smiled and kicked your legs when I said 'peekaboo!'"*]

Would you like to play the game again?

[*The infant may want to repeat the game several times. Use the following strategies to repeat steps of the game:*

- *Say the same phrases each time:*
  - *"Where am I?"*
  - *"Peekaboo! Here I am!"*
- *Use your voice to add interest and excitement to the game. Pause as you cover your face, then say the word "peekaboo" with enthusiasm.*
- *Describe the infant's reactions.*

Transition out of the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest.]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the game. Example: "We played a Peekaboo game. You watched me hide my face. You giggled when I said 'peekaboo!' You wanted to play over and over again. This was a fun game to play together!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates with a caregiver in a repetitive *Peekaboo* game using a scarf.

Key Concepts
Game
Peekaboo

Materials Needed
1 sheer scarf

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Eyes, Nose, Toes Peekaboo! by DK Publishing

This activity is for an infant who sits with support or independently. Position the infant across from you in a secure position. Introduce the scarf and explain the *Peekaboo* game. Example: "We are going to play the *Peekaboo* game! I am going to put the scarf on my head. Then I will take the scarf off! You can watch me!" Place the scarf over your head and with anticipation say "Where am I? Where did I go?" Pull the scarf off with enthusiasm and say "Peekaboo! Here I am!" Describe the infant's reactions to the game. Example: "You watched me cover my head. You kicked your legs before I said 'peekaboo!' Now you are smiling!" Repeat your words and actions unless the infant shows distress or a lack of interest in the game.

Invite the infant to cover his/her head with the scarf to play *Peekaboo* with you. Example: "Now it is your turn! May I put the scarf over you? (*Gently place the scarf over infant's head.*) Where is Riley? Where did Riley go?" With enthusiasm, remove the scarf. Example: "Peekaboo! Here is Riley!" Describe the infant's reactions. Example: "You were quiet when you were under the scarf. Then you laughed and waved your arms when I said 'peekaboo!' You are having fun with this game!"

The infant may want to play the game several more times. Each time, ask the infant who should be under the scarf. Example: "You are kicking your legs and smiling. You want to play again! Where do you want the scarf to go? Should I put the scarf on you?" Move the scarf in the direction of the two possibilities (your face, the infant's face) as you describe each. When you repeat the game, offer the same phrases and describe the infant's reaction.

Show anticipation and excitement during each round of the game. Invite the infant to help you say a version of the word "peekaboo." Consistently describe the infant's actions and responses during the activity. Example: "Where is Zander? I hear giggles, but I don't see him! The scarf is moving . . . peekaboo, Zander! There you are!"

Watch the infant's reactions to determine when to end the activity. Conclude by recognizing the infant's participation. Example: "You played the *Peekaboo* game with me! First I hid under the scarf and said 'peekaboo!' Then you hid under the scarf! You laughed and waved your arms when I took the scarf off! We had fun playing this game together."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Each of these options encourage a responsive and interactive game experience with infants. Many infants are familiar with the *Peekaboo* game and will delight in sharing the game with a trusted caregiver. A book about *Peekaboo* is shared in Block 5. Many infants will want to repeat the game over and over. While this game may appear boring to adults, the repetitive pattern

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

of words and actions supports the infant's growth and development in many areas, such as object permanence, motor skill development, social interactions, and recognition of patterns. Repeating the key words of the game actively supports vocabulary awareness.

Infants will show interest in the game by showing signs of anticipation and surprise, such as smiling, giggling, watching, waving their arms, or kicking their legs. In Option 2, some infants may reach for or grasp the scarf. Infants may also express interest in the game by vocalizing, including cooing, babbling, and later saying a version of "peekaboo." Young infants may be more comfortable watching you cover and then reveal your face. Older infants may delight in covering and then revealing themselves over and over.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ In Option 2, some infants may be uncomfortable with a scarf over their head. Provide time for the infant to explore the scarf prior to the activity. Start the game by gently placing the scarf on top of the infant's head and then removing it immediately. If the infant continues to appear uncomfortable, remove the scarf and offer the game with you covering your eyes with your hands, as demonstrated in Option 1. ■ Watch the infant's responses to the game closely. If the infant becomes startled by your enthusiasm, slow the actions of the game and speak in a calmer, more soothing voice.

Enrichment ■ If the infant shows interest in saying "peekaboo," encourage use of part of the word such as "peek" or "boo." ■ Invite several infants to join you in the game. Provide a scarf for each infant to explore the scarves. Invite infants to hide under their scarves. Demonstrate enthusiasm and excitement as they reveal themselves. Draw attention to each infant's actions.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several sheer or thin scarves

Sheer scarves are a wonderful prop for infants to play *Peekaboo*. Most infants are familiar with and enjoy playing *Peekaboo*. Provide the scarves during floor time for the infants to explore. Provide a clear clue for playing *Peekaboo* with the scarves, such as placing one over your head or over a favorite toy. Invite an infant to grasp the scarf to remove it, or to watch you reveal a covered toy. Provide anticipation, enthusiasm, and then excitement when the scarf is removed. Infants may enjoy these games being repeated several times.

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several sheer or thin scarves

Peekaboo is a favorite game of many children. Options 1 and 2 can be easily adapted for toddlers and young preschool-age children. In small groups, invite one child at a time to use the scarf to play *Peekaboo*. While the child hides under the scarf, sing a short peekaboo song. (Tune: "Where Has My Little Dog Gone")

Where, oh where, has our Zoe gone?
Where, oh where, can she be?

Invite children to say "peekaboo" together when the child removes the scarf. Ensure each child has a turn to hide under the scarf. Infants who are comfortable being under the scarf can participate also.

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BLOCK 8

Exploring Textures

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

A young infant looks at and/or touches similar toys with different textures.

Key Concepts
Look
Touch
Hold
Feel
Different

Materials Needed
3 teddy bears of different textures

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Baby Touch and Feel Cuddly Animals by DK Publishing

BEGIN: [*Sit close to an infant who is able to sit independently on the floor or hold the infant on your lap.*]

EXPLAIN: We have teddy bears to touch or hold. Each bear feels different.

[*Hold two of the bears at the infant's chest. Describe the bear(s) the infant looks at. Example: "This white bear feels soft and fluffy. The brown bear feels soft and bumpy."*]

ASK: Would you like to hold (or touch) a bear?

[*Pause for and comment on the infant's response. The infant may look, vocalize, and/or reach for a bear. Example: "You made a noise. I think you want to look at the bear."*

Help the infant just enough so he/she can touch or grasp one bear. Hold the toy bear within easy access for an infant who is not able or interested in holding the toy.]

ACT: [*The infant may explore the bear with his/her hands or by mouthing the bear.*

Describe the infant's action with the teddy bear and the texture of the bear. Example: "You are looking at the fluffy bear. Here is the fluffy bear for you to hold (or touch)."

Offer another bear for the infant to feel by holding it near the infant's chest. The infant may release the first bear or may need your help in trying to hold both bears. Or the infant may look at the second bear while holding the first bear. Describe the infant's actions and the texture characteristics of the second bear. Point to the characteristics you describe.

Offer an opportunity for the infant to feel the two bears positioned near each other. If the infant seems interested, point to and describe texture differences between the two bears. Example: "You are looking at the teddy bears. This is the fluffy bear. This is the bumpy bear. The bumps are soft."

Display a third bear and ask the infant if he/she would like to see another bear. Hold the third bear near the infant's chest if the infant

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Exploring Textures *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

seems interested. Describe texture characteristics of the bear and the infant's actions with the third bear.

Continue to talk about the infant's actions and the bear characteristics. The infant will give signals when he/she is interested in moving to a different activity.]

RECAP: [*Briefly summarize the infant's actions with the toy bears. Example: "(Infant's name), you looked at the bumpy, brown bear. Then you looked at the fluffy, white bear. You held one bear at a time. You used your fingers and mouth to learn about the bear. You are learning how things can be different."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

Some infants may wish to hold and manipulate three bears. Some infants may be more focused on looking. Other infants may be especially interested in one aspect of the bear, such as the eyes. The activity offers the infant an opportunity to explore objects that feel different without explicitly teaching the infant about textures. Although some infants may want to mouth the toy(s), generally infants have a keen interest in touching objects. Feeling objects with different textures fosters an infant's ability to begin organizing bits of information about things in his/her setting. Follow the infant's lead to determine the length of the activity.

Talk about what is of interest to the infant and gently draw his/her attention to the texture during a portion of the activity. A young infant will likely not understand any or most of the words you offer, but over time the key descriptions will be meaningful.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Find a comfortable pace of interaction with the infant by adjusting your words and actions in response to the infant's approach to the toys. ■ Repeat key words, such as soft, fluffy, and bumpy. ■ If a young infant cannot grasp the bear, touch his/her hand lightly with the toy. ■ You may wish to lightly touch an infant's hand with the bear if the infant does not touch the bear when it is offered.

Enrichment ■ Briefly animate the bears to create interest. Make the bears talk to the infant without losing focus on texture differences.

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BLOCK 8

Exploring Textures *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant touches and manipulates two different types of initially connected objects.

Key Concepts
Touch
Feel
Pull

Materials Needed
1–2 balls with holes
3 silky scarves for each ball

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Baby Touch and Feel Cuddly Animals by DK Publishing

Put several silky scarves inside 1–2 balls. Leave edges exposed so an infant can grasp part of the scarf. Invite a mobile infant to explore scarves that are inside a ball. Encourage the infant to touch and feel the soft, silky textures. The infant may or may not need gentle encouragement for pulling scarves from the ball.

Sit close to the infant and describe his/her actions. Example: "You smiled when you pulled the scarf from the ball." Gently draw attention to the soft scarf and the firm ball. Lightly touch the scarf to the infant's skin. Invite the infant to play with a scarf by waving it.

There are several possibilities to consider if you prepare two balls with scarves. One is to keep the second ball in reserve so it can be offered if the infant appears interested in more exploration. Another possibility is for you to explore one ball with scarves while the infant explores the other ball with scarves, keeping in mind that your actions are likely to be of keen interest to the infant.

On another day, consider using other textured fabric in the ball, such as a terry washcloth, a four-inch square of corduroy, or a four-inch square of cotton fabric. Through repeated experiences with a variety of textures, an infant will begin to discriminate the feel of objects.

What to Look For—Option 2

A ball with scarves is a highly appealing object to most infants. An infant may use both his/her hands and mouth to explore a ball and scarves. Some infants initially may want to roll the ball. An interaction with you, focused on rolling a ball, can be beneficial. But if it appears the infant does not notice the scarves in the ball, pull a scarf a little further out of the ball.

Infants will be interested in the contrasting feel of the firm ball and silky, soft scarves. Watch the infant's reaction to discovering there are several scarves inside the ball. The scarves may become a major focus of attention.

Remember that an important aspect of the activity is the presence and interest of a familiar adult. Talking to the infant about the textures and describing his/her actions lets the infant know the exploration has meaning and associated words, even though the infant does not understand specific words.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Give the ball to the infant if it rolls away. ■ Pull a sizable edge of a scarf out of the ball so the infant has an adequate amount to explore, especially if the infant seems frustrated in pulling on a scarf.

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Exploring Textures *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

Enrichment ■ The infant will be interested in actions you take related to the ball. Model exploration of the ball by using your finger to extract a scarf from the ball. The infant may imitate your actions and discover how to get out more scarf material.

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Exploring Textures *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

Older infants touch and manipulate two types of objects with highly different textures.

Key Concepts
Feel
Hard
Soft

Materials Needed
Tub or sensory table
12 silky scarves
10 plastic rings (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Baby Touch and Feel Cuddly Animals by DK Publishing

Be Prepared: Plastic ring possibilities include rings from a stacking ring toy. If rings are not available, use other smooth toys, such as small balls, and adjust the activity described below.

Place the plastic rings covered with silky scarves on the sensory table. Invite infants who can stand to join you at the sensory table to explore how things feel. Kneel next to the sensory table so you are at eye level with the infants. Announce their actions and discoveries. Put one scarf through the hole in a ring. Infants will enjoy pulling the scarf out of the ring. Hold the ring so an infant can pull the scarf through the hole, if necessary. Talk with infants about contrasting textures, especially the contrast of silky scarf and smooth plastic ring. Emphasize and repeat soft and hard as infants touch and manipulate scarves and rings.

Throughout the week notice and point out to infants some different textures in your room. Example: Describe the feeling of play materials, surfaces, and clothing. The infants may not understand what you say, but they will begin to learn there are words for what they touch and manipulate in their environment.

What to Look For—Option 3

The combination of high-contrast materials is an appealing aspect of this activity for infants. The infants may approach the objects in different ways. Some infants may enjoy a simple game of finding rings you have covered with scarves. Others may focus on pulling a scarf through a ring. Some may want to mouth a ring while exploring objects on the table.

Watch for opportunities to provide words for actions. Example: "The ring fell down." Talk in short, clear phrases. Also, watch for an infant's attempt to imitate a word you say. Repeat the word. Acknowledge the infant's utterance. Example: "You said 'ring.'" Infants will be attuned to words you say to describe the scarves and rings.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Draw attention to the ring hole by placing a ring on your finger. ■ Demonstrate how to pull a scarf through a ring.

Enrichment ■ If putting a scarf into a ring is of interest to an infant, suggest the infant put a scarf through the holes of two rings. The distance between the rings might be of interest to some infants. The infant may pull on each of the two rings to remove the scarf.

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BLOCK 8

Exploring Textures *(continued)*

Cognitive

Interest Area

Materials needed: texture board books (such as *Baby Touch and Feel Cuddly Animals* by DK Publishing), texture balls, soft dolls or animals, textured play mat

Display the book in your room along with other books with texture pages. Share the books with 1–2 infants at a time. Place several texture balls in a basket where mobile infants will discover them. On another day, place soft dolls or animals on a textured play mat on the floor to create an interesting area to explore.

Family Child Care

Materials needed: textured balls; mesh laundry bag; box or bag; textured toys; paper; drawing tools; textured objects, such as leaves, yarn, or card stock shapes

Engage older children in your setting in exploring different textures while you offer Option 2 or 3 to infants. Toddlers will enjoy removing textured balls from a small mesh laundry bag. Preschool-age children may reach into a box or bag to find soft, hard, or bumpy textured toys. Preschool-age and older children may enjoy coloring on paper that has flat, textured objects underneath, such as leaves, short pieces of yarn, or shapes cut from card stock.

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BLOCK 8

Getting Calm

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while being held in a caregiver's arms.

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the words and actions of the *Little Mousie* game (see adjacent description).

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

ASK: Are you ready for a fun game?

[*Pause for and acknowledge infant's response. Example: "I see you are looking at me now. I think you want to play."*]

Little Mousie Game

Here comes a little mousie
[*Start a finger walking up the leg from the foot*]

Looking for a housie.
[*Walk finger up the leg to the body*]

He runs and runs
[*Continue up to the neck*]

And finds one
Right here!
[Gently wiggle your fingers near the infant's neck for one second]

ACT: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant. Walk your fingers gently from the infant's foot toward his/her midsection while reciting the "Little Mousie" rhyme. Offer a light touch at the point you say "Right here!" Avoid tickling.*

Watch the infant's reactions to the game closely. If the infant turns away or appears at all distressed, stop the activity. The infant may signal for you to repeat the game. Describe the infant's reaction to mousie. Examples: "What a big smile you have! You like the Mousie game!" "You are making a sad face. Let's stop our mousie game and find a way to feel calm and happy." Describe your response to the infant's expression. Examples: "You liked having mousie visit. We can do our mousie game one more time!" "You did not want to play the Mousie game, so I stopped. We can calm down now."

Conclude the activity by announcing that the game is over. Pretend to put the mouse in your pocket. Example: "Our game is all done. Bye-bye mouse. We can calm down now."

Hold the infant and provide comfort, such as patting on the back, quietly singing a familiar song, or offering soft-voice reminders that it is time to rest.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you review the activity. Examples: "We had fun with the Little Mousie game, Lucia! You laughed and told me with your big smile that you liked the game. We stopped, and I held you while you got calm again."*]

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while sitting on a caregiver's lap.

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the words and actions of the *Little Mousie* game (see description in Option 1).

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to play the *Little Mousie* game. Turn the infant slightly so that he/she is secure in your arms while also able to make some eye contact with you. Ensure the infant feels secure and comfortable prior to beginning the game. Example: "We are going to play the *Little Mousie* game. My fingers are going to walk up your leg! Are you ready to play?" Acknowledge that the infant is ready. Example: "I see you are kicking your legs and smiling. I think you are ready to play!" Begin reciting the rhyme while gently walking your fingers up the infant's leg. Show enthusiasm when the "mousie" stops "Right here!" Be sure to use a light touch and avoid tickling or startling the infant.

Watch closely for the infant's reactions to the activity. If the infant shows signs of enjoyment, you may repeat the rhyme one or more times. If the infant shows signs of disinterest or distress at any time, stop the rhyme. Talk with the infant about his/her response to the activity. Examples: "You had fun playing the *Little Mousie* game today, Isaac! You laughed when the mousie walked up your leg." "You did not like the mousie touching your leg, Julieta. You did not want to play the *Little Mousie* game. We stopped, and now we are getting calm again."

After the rhyme, quietly announce that our game is over and it is time to rest and be calm. Provide gentle reminders if necessary. Bring the infant gently toward you, holding him/her with his/her back against you and your arms around the infant. Quietly hum or sing a familiar song. Provide quiet time for the infant to calm him/herself. Describe the activity. Example: "We had fun playing the *Little Mousie* game today! We rested when our game was over. Now you are sitting with me, and we are calm."

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BLOCK 8

Getting Calm *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity while sitting independently, facing a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the words and actions of the *Little Mousie* game (see description in Option 1).

Invite an infant to join you on the floor to play the *Little Mousie* game. Sit facing the infant with a smile and ensure the infant is ready to play. Example: "We are going to play the *Little Mousie* game. My fingers are going to be a pretend mousie that walks up your leg! Are you ready?" Begin reciting the rhyme and gently walk your fingers from the infant's foot to his/her midsection. Show enthusiasm when the mousie stops, using a light touch. If the infant is enjoying the activity, you may repeat the rhyme several times. If the infant shows signs of disinterest or distress at any time, end the rhyme. Describe the infant's response to the rhyme and motions. Example: "You had fun playing the *Little Mousie* game today, Sebastian! You smiled and laughed when the mousie walked up your leg."

After the rhyme, ask the infant to sit and rest with you. The infant may want to sit near you or on your lap. Provide quiet time for the infant to calm him/herself. If needed, support the infant by patting his/her back, quietly humming or singing a favorite song, and/or offering gentle reminders that it is time to rest. Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You had fun playing the *Little Mousie* game. Now you are sitting with me and resting. We are feeling calm."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

This activity is a version of the Block 2 "Rig-a-Jig-Jig" activity designed to help infants learn to calm down. The three options in the current *Little Mousie* game correspond with the infant's level of mobility. Option 3 emphasizes some infant independence in calming down, but it is certainly appropriate to offer the strategies used in Option 2 (and also Option 1) if an infant has difficulty calming down through your verbal support only. In general, some infants may move toward a calm state independently when you indicate the game is over. Others may need additional support to become calm. The plan is designed for an infant who is alert and comfortable. The game is not meant to distract an infant from emotional distress or discomfort.

Most infants will enjoy the anticipation of the gentle touch accompanying the "Right here!" words at the end of the rhyme. Infants may express their delight with smiles and laughter. Some infants may signal they would like you to repeat the rhyme by smiling and making eye contact, kicking their legs, or vocalizing their interest by cooing or laughing aloud. It is important to also watch closely for indications of disinterest or distress during the activity. Some infants may not enjoy the feeling of your fingers walking, or the anticipation

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

of the gentle touch at the end of the rhyme. As described in the option plans, promptly stop the activity and provide comfort if the infant shows any signs of distress.

Your most important role in the activity is to help the infant calm himself/herself. Carefully watch the infant's responses to a strategy (or strategies) you use. Especially in Options 2 and 3, give the infant a few moments of quiet time to respond to a strategy before offering additional help.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Infants who are new to a game of this type may be more comfortable with a slow introduction to "mousie." Begin moving your fingers in the air slightly above the infant's body and then lightly touch the infant at the end. Moving your fingers in the air without touching the infant offers less stimulation and an opportunity for the infant to see what the mousie is doing.

Enrichment ■ If the infant is familiar with the game, heighten the infant's anticipation of the "right here!" ■ Repeat the rhyme, varying the speed by starting slowly, speeding up, and then returning to a slow pace.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: none

During floor play, engage infants in similar rhymes that involve a moment of anticipation. "This Little Piggy" is a good example. Remember to use a light touch at the end, not a tickle. Infants may enjoy watching the anticipation of a peer engaged in the rhyme. Ensure each interested infant gets a turn to participate. Be sure to encourage infants to calm down after the exciting activity, using one or more of the strategies in this plan as needed.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

Play a related *Little Mousie* game with older toddlers and preschool-age children in your care. This may be an appropriate activity for outdoor play. Invite older toddlers and preschool-age children to be little mice looking for a home. You may wish to substitute the word "run" with the word "creep." Encourage children to slowly creep around, pretending to look for a home. When the rhyme reaches the end, the children can jump to the ground in their "home" when you say "Right here!" Infants will enjoy participating by being held during the activity. Before moving to the next activity, support children in resting by sitting quietly and, if necessary, using one or more of the strategies suggested in the activity options.

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BLOCK 8

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant and caregiver play together with a musical toy, with opportunity to engage in back-and-forth interactions.

Key Concepts
Look
Listen
Play

Materials Needed
Set of maracas

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a comfortable reclining position.*

Smile and greet the infant using his/her name. Acknowledge the infant's reactions, including vocalizations, facial expressions, and/or gestures. Examples: "You are smiling and looking at me, Simon! I smiled at you, and you are smiling at me!"]

ACT: [*Introduce the two maracas by holding both toys about 12 inches from the infant.*]

I have two toys for us to play with! Listen, these toys make noise!

[*Gently shake the maracas and then hold them out within reach of the infant.*]

ASK: Would you like to play with the toys?

[*Gently shake one or both of the maracas and describe their sound. Example: "Listen, do you hear the sound of the toys when I shake them? It is fun to listen to the sounds of our toys."*

If the infant does not reach for a toy, gently shake one maraca and offer it again. If the infant seems mostly interested in watching you play with the maracas, shake one or both toys gently as you describe the sounds. Especially describe the infant's reactions to the sounds and your actions. Imitate and describe a facial expression the infant offers in response to your movement of a maraca. It is not necessary for the infant to hold or manipulate a maraca for meaningful interaction between you and the infant.

If the infant holds or manipulates a maraca, use the following strategies to encourage a back-and-forth exchange with the infant:

- *Describe the infant's reactions and actions with the toys. Examples: "You are smiling and reaching for the toy!" "You are holding the toy and waving it back and forth. You are listening to the sound it makes!"*
- *Imitate the infant's actions as well as any facial expressions or vocalizations. Example: "You are waving the toy back and forth. I am waving my toy back and forth too! Listen to the sounds of our toys!"*

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

- *Acknowledge any attempt the infant makes to imitate your actions. Example: "You are tapping your toy on your tummy. I am tapping my toy on my leg. Tap, tap, tap."*
- *Offer brief pauses in your communication for the infant to respond.*

Maintain your focus on the same toy or action that interests the infant. If the infant shifts his/her attention to other objects or people in the room, shift your attention to the same object or person. Describe what you think the infant sees. Wrap up the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of what happened during the activity. Example: "Thank you for sharing time with me, Adrianna. We played with toys that make noise! You waved your toy back and forth. I waved my toy back and forth! We listened to the sounds. We had fun together!"*]

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BLOCK 8

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant participates in back-and-forth interactions with a caregiver focused on playing a musical toy.

Key Concepts
Look
Listen
Play

Materials Needed
Toy piano or xylophone with mallets

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit with you on the floor to play with a toy piano or xylophone. Place the toy instrument on the floor between you. Describe the toy. Example: "Look, I have a toy piano for us to play with today! The piano makes different sounds." Demonstrate how to make a sound on the instrument. Describe your actions. Make an exaggerated happy face and describe what happened when you hit a key. Example: "Did you hear the sound? I pushed this key, and the piano made a sound. Listen, I'm going to push it again!" Then invite the infant to make a sound on the instrument.

If the infant makes a sound on the instrument, use an exaggerated happy face and tone to affirm his/her actions. Example: "You did it! You pushed the key and made a sound! What are you going to do next?"

Encourage back-and-forth interactions with the infant using the following strategies:

- Imitate the infant's actions. Example: "You pushed the yellow key and made a sound! Now, I am going to push the yellow key. I made a sound too!"
- Invite the infant to imitate your actions with the toy. Example: "I pushed the blue key and made a sound! Now it's your turn! Which key are you going to push?"
- Recognize and respond to ways the infant participates in the activity. Example: "You clapped your hands when you made a sound on our piano! You are making music with our toy piano!"

As you interact with the infant, remember to pause and allow time for the infant to respond to your words and to the activity itself. Continue to encourage imitation behaviors by imitating the infant's actions and encouraging him/her to imitate yours.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

The toy is a means to your interaction with the infant. An infant's familiarity with a toy will likely influence his/her participation with the item. Some infants may wish to explore the toy in some detail. There is a lot for the infant to consider, including the range of different keys and how pushing a key (or

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

using a mallet to hit a key on a xylophone) makes a sound. Describe the infant's explorations without directing the actions. Remember that, at this age, infants are not expected to be taught or to learn colors, but you may wish to refer to colors of keys in your descriptions of an instrument.

After a period of exploration, watch for the infant to look at you, point to the toy, reach for your hand, or vocalize interest in playing with you regarding the toy. Some infants may prefer to watch and listen as you manipulate the toy, as noted in the Option 1 description.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Adjust your talk to the infant's level of excitement during the activity. Examples: If an infant seems excited about the activity, you might say "Oh, wow, Clara! You are using the mallet to tap the keys! I can hear the sounds you are making!" If an infant offers a quieter reaction to the activity, consider providing a calm and informative response such as, "You are pushing on each key on our piano. You are listening to the different sounds. Blue key, yellow key. You are pushing the keys." ■ In your demonstration of an instrument in the opening segment of Option 2, invite the infant to point to a key for you to tap.

Enrichment ■ In Option 1, use a maraca to gently tap the infant while naming body parts. Example: "I tap your nose. I tap your toes. Where should I tap next?" ■ If an infant shows interest in how a maraca makes sound, point to and describe how the little balls make a noise.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of musical toys (with duplicates), such as maracas, rattles, caged bells, and shakers

Place musical toys near several infants. Sit close and encourage the infants' awareness of one another, including their use of instruments. Describe the actions of the infants as they interact with the toys. Recognize facial expressions and repeat and extend vocalizations as infants play.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of musical toys

Option 2 can be adapted for older children in your setting. Encourage two older toddlers or preschool-age children to take turns making sounds with one or two instruments. Promote interactions among the children. If two instruments are available, invite the children to play their instruments at the same time and then play alone while the other listens.

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BLOCK 8

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

A young infant watches a caregiver manipulate toys, with opportunities for the infant to grasp and hold a toy.

Key Concepts
Reach
Grasp
Hold

Materials Needed
2 small toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Cognitive
Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: Select different toys that appeal to the infant and are easy for the infant to grasp.

Warmly greet the infant and lay him/her on his/her back on a firm mat or carpet. Sit on the floor with the infant's feet toward you. Hold one of the toys about 13 inches in front of the infant so he/she can see easily it. Talk with the infant as you move the toy slightly. Example: "Angel, you see our toy. I am moving our toy side to side."

Move the toy to one side and back to center. Next move the toy to the opposite side and back to the center. Observe and describe the infant's eye movements and his/her reaction to seeing the toy. Example: "I think you are excited about seeing our little toy. You watched the toy as it moved from side to side!"

Offer the infant an opportunity to hold the toy. Place it in the infant's hand if interested. Some infants may hold the toy briefly.

Present the next toy by holding it a few inches from the infant. Observe the infant's reaction. Some infants may see the toy and reach for it. Allow the infant to grasp the toy. Some infants may be more interested in their own hands and not actually touch the toys.

What to Look For—Option 1

If the infant does not appear to pay attention to the toy, observe to learn where his/her focus is directed. Talk with the infant about what he/she is doing at that moment. If the infant is looking at another object, make another attempt to engage the infant by saying his/her name cheerfully. Infants enjoy seeing a familiar caregiver smiling and saying hello.

If the infant is uncomfortable, take action to relieve the discomfort. A young infant may need to be held upright. Try patting the infant's back. If you notice the infant pulling his/her knees to the chest, it may indicate pressure in the tummy. Hold the infant and rub his/her back. Often patting the back and/or holding the infant upright with light pressure on the tummy gives relief. Allow time for the infant to bring his/her attention back to the activity. Reintroduce a toy. Watch the infant's reactions and respond as if you are having a conversation.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If the infant drops a toy, pick it up, show the toy to the infant, and place it in the infant's hand. ■ If the infant is more interested in her/his hands, describe how the infant is using her/his hands.

Enrichment ■ Continue moving the toy as the infant follows it with his/her eye movements. Increase the range of motion that the toys is moved. Move the toy forward slightly and backward slightly along with moving it from side to side.

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BLOCK 8

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An older infant practices releasing an infant snap-lock bead.

Key Concepts
Reach
Hold
Let go

Materials Needed
1-quart plastic tub
4 infant snap-lock beads (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Cognitive

Be Prepared: Snap-lock beads are available commercially for infants six months and older.

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor facing the infant. Invite the infant to play with you and some pretty beads. Place the snap-lock beads on the floor where the infant can easily reach them. Describe the colorful beads. Hold one snap-lock bead close to the center of the infant's chest. Encourage the infant to reach for and grasp the bead.*]

EXPLAIN: [*Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You are holding a big bead! You looked at the bead and got it with your hand."*

Hold one bead in your hand for the infant to see.]

You have a bead. This is my bead.

ACT: [*Hold your bead between your thumb and finger(s). Let the bead drop to the floor when you describe your "let go" action. Emphasize the words let go.*]

I am holding my bead with my fingers. Now I am going to let go of my bead.

Look at what happened to my bead when I let it go. I let go of my bead. My bead dropped to the floor.

[*Move the tub close to the infant. When the infant is watching your actions, point to the tub.*]

This is our tub. Our beads can go into the tub.

[*Hold one bead between your thumb and fingers so the infant can see it. Explain that you are going to let go of your bead. The bead will drop into the tub. Use the infant's name. Emphasize "let go." Example: "Daniel, I am holding a red bead. I am going to let go of my bead. The bead will drop into our tub. Watch what happens." Release your bead. Wait for the infant's verbal or nonverbal response. If appropriate, acknowledge the infant's attention to your action. Example: "You watched me let go of the bead. The bead dropped into our bucket."*]

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

ASK: Would you like to let go of your bead?

ACT: [*Encourage the infant to let go of his/her bead. Describe the infant's actions. Offer the infant another bead and encourage him/her to let go of the bead so the bead can drop into the tub. Comment on the infant's actions. Example: "You let go of some more beads!" Respond to all vocalizations and nonverbal reactions.*

Hold several more beads, one at a time, and release each so it drops into the tub. Your actions will provide a model for the infant or serve as a parallel activity. When all beads have been dropped into the tub, pour them onto the floor so the infant can repeat the activity, if interested. Describe your pouring actions.

Ask whether the infant wishes to hold and release more beads. Example: Pick up one of the beads on the floor. Show it to the infant and then release it into the tub. "I let go of a bead. Do you want to drop more beads into our tub?" The infant may show signs of wanting to continue the activity or may be ready for another activity.

End the activity by describing the process of putting away the beads. Encourage the infant to help you put away the beads. Example: "We are all done. Let's put all the beads in the tub. Here is a red bead. I put it in the tub. Now put a blue bead in the tub. Lots of beads go into our tub."]

RECAP: You can hold on and let go! We played a game with beads and a tub. You held a bead and then let go of a bead. We dropped our beads into our tub. We know how to hold and then let go of things.

What to Look For—Option 2

Look carefully at how the infant manages each of the fine motor skills involved in this activity: reach, hold (grasp), let go. Some infants may pick up beads from the floor, and other infants will wait for you to offer a bead. Offer encouragement and just enough help for the infant to reach the beads and grasp them on his/her own. Let the infant lead the activity. If an infant prefers to hold, shake, and/or mouth the beads, adjust the activity to match the infant's interest and ability. Some infants may want to look into the tub to see the bead. Ask the infant "Where did it go?" Or look into the tub with the infant. "There is your blue bead. You let go of your blue bead. Your bead dropped into the tub!"

At this age, it is not important for infants to prefer one hand or the other. The infant may be interested in the activity for a few minutes or longer. Infants are not expected to understand or contribute to "cleanup" although some will enjoy putting the beads into the tub at the end of the activity.

The activity involves elements that will be appealing to most infants. Infants will enjoy the sound of the beads landing in the tub. Infants also may enjoy looking at the different colors of the beads while you describe them and then let go of each.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Be sure the tub is in close proximity to the infant. ■ Say "let go" when the infant lets go of the bead. ■ If the infant holds onto a snap-lock bead rather than letting it go, continue talking about the beads. Hold a bead for the infant to see. While the infant is watching, let go of the bead so it drops into the tub. Encourage the infant to reach toward the mid-point of his/her chest. ■ Give the infant a bead for each hand.

Enrichment ■ An infant who readily grasps and lets go of a bead may enjoy having one bead in each hand. ■ If the sound of a bead landing in the tub appeals to an infant, connect two beads to provide more weight and offer it to the infant to let go into the tub. ■ An infant may enjoy the challenge of dropping other items into the container.

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BLOCK 8

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

Older infants together practice picking up and releasing infant snap-lock beads, including dropping beads into a small container.

Key Concepts
Pick up

Let go

Materials Needed
16 infant snap-lock beads (see Be Prepared)

1 small pail with handle—1 per infant

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Cognitive

Be Prepared: Snap-lock beads are available commercially for infants six months and older.

Sit on the floor next to mobile infants. Show and describe the pails and snap-lock beads. Demonstrate how to pick up and then let go of a bead (one at a time) so it drops into a pail. Invite each infant to join you in picking up and then releasing a bead into his/her own pail.

Describe infants' actions. Emphasize let go when an infant releases a bead. You may wish to place snap-lock beads in a central spot so all infants can reach them or hold a snap-lock bead for each infant to grasp. Draw attention to the sound of beads landing in the buckets. Connect several beads to create a slightly louder landing sound. Use your pail of beads to demonstrate pouring beads onto the floor. Invite the infants to do the same. An infant who is crawling may enjoy manipulating the small pail or pulling it along as he/she crawls. Walking infants will enjoy carrying the pail.

What to Look For—Option 3

You may observe that infants who sit well balanced are increasingly focused on fine motor skills, like filling a pail or putting their index finger into the bead hole. Playing with toys changes once an infant has the strength and balance to sit independently. Gains in fine motor and gross motor skills make it possible for infants to broaden their explorations. The infant has more skills for getting toys, including the items involved in the current activity option.

Playing with pails and beads offers valuable sensory experiences for infants. You can enrich the play by paying attention to each infant and making comments to support learning. Examples: "Your beads are in the pail." "You took all the beads out." An infant may respond to a comment with a look, an action, or a vocalization. Some infants may enjoy taking turns putting beads into the pail with you.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Demonstrate how to open and shut your hand. Say "open and shut" as you open and shut your hand. Hold a bead and say "shut," showing how your hand is closed around the bead. Say "open" and open your hand. Say "I let go of the bead. I opened my hand and let go." ■ Place a bead in infant's hand. Ask "Do you want to let it go?"

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

Enrichment ■ Describe the noise that the bead made when it landed in the bucket. Drop beads that are connected to each other and describe the noise as being louder.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: pail with small toys, infant snap-lock beads, star builders, sensory tub with water

Provide different objects for infants to view from the floor. Also, create an attractive arrangement a non-mobile infant can see when he/she is held by a caregiver. Non-mobile infants may enjoy holding a toy after a bottle feeding. Take a few moments to reintroduce the toy and observe the infant's reaction.

Infants who are crawling will enjoy finding a pail of small toys to empty. Place several beads on a low surface where standing infants can reach them. Encourage the infant to drop the beads into a container. On another day, provide different toys (such as linking star shapes) to let go into a container.

Place two inches of water in the sensory tub and encourage infants who stand to drop snap-lock beads into the water. Draw attention to the sound and feel of the splashing water.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: plastic jars or bottles, small toys, muffin pan set of small items, set of tongs

Older children in your setting can experience expanded versions of the plan's three options. Provide an activity for toddlers to hold and then let go of small toys into plastic jars or bottles. Give each preschool-age child a muffin pan and a set of small items. Explain that the same number of items should go in each opening (hole) in the muffin pan. Provide one item per opening or increase the challenge by providing two items per opening. You also may wish to offer a set of tongs that an older child may use for picking up and releasing (letting go of) one or more items per opening.

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BLOCK 9 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing experience that emphasizes listening to the caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of babies.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of babies.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book and communicate about pictures of babies.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes the concept of a picture and how words are associated with things we can see.

Option 2 (OO) An infant looks at and feels parts of pictures of animals

Option 3 (OO) An older infant looks at and communicates about pictures in a book that a caregiver points to and names.

Self-Regulation

Focusing and Remembering

Option 1 (OO) A young infant watches a caregiver manipulate a cup and ball.

Option 2 (OO) An infant watches a caregiver manipulate a cup and ball, with a follow-up opportunity to play with the toys.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) An infant watches a caregiver describe his/her own features and actions in a mirror.

Option 2 (OO) An infant looks in a mirror as a caregiver describes him/her as well as any movements.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) A young infant stands up with caregiver support while facing the caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) A young infant stands up with caregiver support while facing away from the caregiver.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant stands up with the support of a caregiver and appropriate furniture.

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

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BLOCK 9

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing experience that emphasizes listening to the caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of babies.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

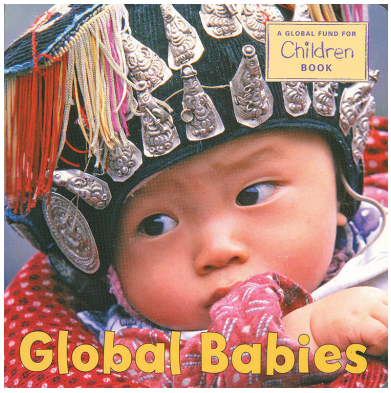
Materials Needed
Global Babies by The Global Fund for Children

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant comfortably reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

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

EXPLAIN: I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the baby?



[*Pause and watch for the infant's response. The young infant may show interest in the book by vocalizing, turning toward you, gazing at the picture, or reaching out and batting at the book. Respond to the infant's interest in the book sharing. Example: "You are looking at the picture of the baby, Elias. You are smiling at the baby! Let's read our book and look at more pictures!"*

The infant may show disinterest by looking away, fussing, or turning his/her body away from the book. Respond to the infant's disinterest in the activity. Example: "I can see you are squirming away from the book. I don't think you want to read our book right now, Trinity. I can hold you or we can find another activity."]

There are pictures of babies in our book. Let's turn the page and look at the babies!

ACT: [*At this age, it is not necessary to read the text. Infants will benefit from hearing you talk about the pictures as you share the book together. Example: "Look at this baby! The baby's eyes are closed. The baby is sleeping."*

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

- *Point to and describe pictures. Example: "See this baby? The baby is wearing a furry hat! The furry hat is keeping the baby warm."*
- *Spend more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are smiling at this baby. The baby is smiling just like you are! (Point to pictured baby's mouth.) Do you see the baby's smiling mouth?"*

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

- *Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are kicking your legs, Jamal! I hear you making a happy sound. I think you like this picture of the baby!"*
- *Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book sharing.*

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book together! Our book has pictures of baby faces. You smiled and kicked your legs when you looked at the smiling baby. We pointed to some of the different hats. This was a fun book to read together!"*]

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BLOCK 9

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

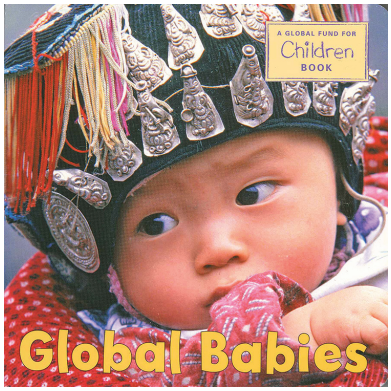
Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of babies.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Global Babies by The Global Fund for Children

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional



Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "Do you see the picture of the baby? This baby is wearing a hat. Our book is about babies. I wonder what we are going to see?" Open the book and begin looking at the pictures and reading with the infant using the following strategies:

Invite the infant to help you turn the pages of the book. Turn the pages as slowly or as quickly as the infant seems to prefer. It is not necessary to look at each page.

Point to and describe the pictured baby. Example: "Look at this baby. The baby is wearing a colorful hat—see? Here are the baby's eyes. Do you see the baby's nose?"

Describe what the infant is looking at. Example: "You are looking at the sleeping baby. The baby is snuggled in tight. His eyes are closed. The baby is sleeping."

Talk about pictures of babies that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. You may wish to provide additional context or information. Example: "You are touching the baby's hat. The hat has fancy decorations! I think this is a special hat."

- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are sticking out your tongue! You are looking at the baby with his tongue out. You are doing the same as the baby in our book. You both have your tongues out!"
- Help the infant connect book pictures to his/her own experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "This baby is wearing a furry hat. The hat is keeping the baby warm. You wear a hat when we play outside. Your hat keeps you warm."
- Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book reading.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Joshua. You looked at the pictures of the babies. You stuck your tongue out, just like the baby in the picture. You helped me turn the pages! I think you liked this book."

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BLOCK 9

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

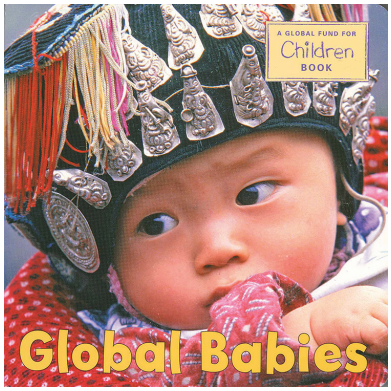
Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book and communicate about pictures of babies.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Global Babies by The Global Fund for Children

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health



Invite an infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to hold the book and turn the pages. Provide assistance, if needed, by keeping all the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: "Our book is about babies. Look at the picture of the baby. This baby is wearing a hat! I wonder what babies we are going to see in our book? Would you like to help me turn the page and see?" Begin reading and looking at the pictures with the older infant using the following strategies:

- Point to and describe some features of the pictured babies. Example: "These are the baby's eyes. Here are the baby's ears. Look, do you see the baby's earrings? You have earrings in your ears too, Imani!"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you label. Example: "The baby has a mouth. Where is the baby's mouth?"
- Provide information about picture characteristics the infant points to. Example: "You are pointing to the baby with his tongue out. Look at the baby's tongue! The baby is making a silly face."
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'night night.' Yes, the baby is sleeping. 'Night night' baby!"
- Help the infant connect picture images to his/her experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "This baby is being carried in a wrap. This wrap looks like the sling your mommy uses to carry you sometimes."
- Follow the infant's cues as to how quickly or slowly to turn the pages. Some pages may be skipped.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Malachi. You pointed to the baby's tongue. Then you pointed to your tongue! You turned the pages to see the next baby. We had fun reading this book together."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Very young infants are developing the ability to focus on pictures and may be more interested in the sound of your voice as you read and talk about the pictures. As infants become older, they may imitate your sounds and/or intonation as you read. Older infants may also express interest by pointing or turning the pages in the book to a particular picture. You may return to particular pictures or pages of interest to the infant.

If the infant begins to lose interest during the book sharing, you may wish to give one gentle attempt to interest the infant before ending the activity. Examples: "Let's look at the baby on the next page!" "Look at this baby. What is this baby doing?" Some book sharing activities may be long, others much shorter.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Have an object available for the infant to mouth or chew instead of the book. ■ Provide a book-related object or prop, such as a baby doll, for the infant to hold during or after the book sharing.

Enrichment ■ Invite the infant to join you in making some of the faces shown in the book's pictures. Example: "I am going to make a silly face like the face shown in our book. Can you make a silly face like this baby?"

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Global Babies* by The Global Fund for Children, several dress-up hats, large mirror

Arrange the book and hats near a large mirror. Invite infants to explore the hats while they look in the mirror. Talk with infants about what they see when they look in the mirror. Young infants may not yet realize the reflection is their own. Infants will likely delight in seeing reflections of babies wearing hats similar to the book.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Global Babies* by The Global Fund for Children; several dress-up hats, scarves, and other clothing accessories; large mirror

Children of all ages enjoy looking at pictures of other children. Emphasize the hats, clothing, and accessories worn by babies in the pictures. Invite children to try on dress-up items in front of the mirror. Help the infants and younger toddlers try on a hat or scarf. Older children may enjoy comparing some of the clothing accessories to those pictured in the book.

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BLOCK 9

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

A young infant participates in book sharing that emphasizes the concept of a picture and how words are associated with things we can see.

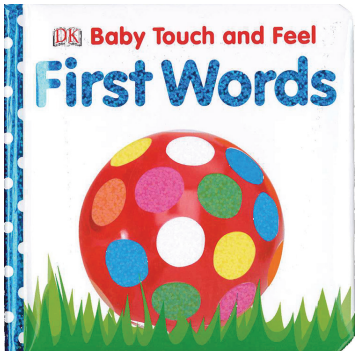
Key Concepts
Picture

Point

Materials Needed
Baby Touch and Feel: First Words by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Hold a nonmobile infant on your lap with firm support for his/her back, neck, and head. Introduce the board book by showing its cover and describing the picture. Use the following strategies to share the book:



- Repeatedly emphasize that we are looking at pictures. Examples: "This is a picture of . . . ." "We are looking at a picture of . . . ." "This pictures shows . . . ."
- Consistently point to images in pictures that you name or describe. Tell the infant you are pointing. Example: "I am pointing to the ball."
- Pause for and acknowledge any infant reactions to pictures.

Spend more time on pictures that appear to be of greater interest to the infant. It is not necessary to look at all pictures in the book. Conclude the session by explaining we talked about pictures in a book.

What to Look For—Option 1

A young infant does not understand most words and is not expected to learn the names of objects shown in book pictures. Yet high-quality book sharing offers simple language associated with book illustrations. Over time, a caregiver's clear descriptions of book pictures help an infant understand that, in general, things have names and we can use words to describe a picture. Pointing to an image you describe is key to helping an infant become aware that objects are associated with words.

Pay attention to the infant's reactions to pictures offered in this book. Single, bold images themselves typically interest infants. Example: A young infant will be drawn to a picture of a strawberry because it is bold and clear, not necessarily because he/she understands the picture represents something many people like to eat. If a specific picture does not interest the infant, go to the next image. You may see an infant smile, kick, or widen his/her eyes when interested in a picture.

If an infant becomes uncomfortable before you have looked at all pictures, put the book aside and attend to the infant's needs. Return to the picture book once the infant is calm.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Use your hand to cover one page as you share the opposite page. ■ Allow ample time for the infant to look at a picture he/she enjoys. ■ Provide a teething-type toy for the infant to mouth instead of the book.

Enrichment ■ When animals are pictured, demonstrate the animal sound. ■ Open a book to a bold picture for the infant to see while he/she has tummy time.

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BLOCK 9

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills
An infant looks at and feels parts of pictures of animals

Key Concepts
Picture
Look
Point

Materials Needed
Baby Touch and Feel: Animals by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to look at pictures of animals in a book. Point to the cover of the book to draw attention to the two bunnies. Encourage the infant to feel the soft parts of the two pictured bunnies, including their noses. Describe what the infant feels. Open the book, point to and name the first animal. Example: "Marie, this is a picture of a kitten. I am pointing to the kitten. The kitten says 'meow!' The kitten is playing with some yarn. We can feel the soft yarn." Encourage the infant to feel the yarn. Describe what the infant feels.

Name and briefly describe the animal shown in each picture and pause for the infant to respond. Point to what you describe. Explain that you are pointing. Invite the infant to feel parts of the picture where available, such as the zebra's stripes and the butterfly's wings. Describe what the infant feels. If an infant shows increased interest, remain on the page and allow the infant to look a little longer. The infant may show interest in a picture by widening his/her eyes, moving hands and arms, or leaning forward. It is not necessary to look at all pictures in the book.

An infant may wish to hold the book or to open and close the pages. Recognize that the infant is learning how books work. Patiently draw the infant's attention back to one picture. Example: "Marie, you can close and open the pages of our book. Would you like to open the book again? Let's look for animals." Invite the infant to point to parts of pictures that seem to be of particular interest.

An infant may enjoy the sensation of slight movement. Example: If the infant is on your lap, lift your legs to create a slight bounce after looking at and talking about a rabbit. "Bunny can hop. I am pointing to the rabbit's strong legs." Raise and lower your knees very gently. "Hop, hop. Bunny rabbit can hop, hop." The motion should be offered to illustrate an idea of the animal movement, not to excite or distract the infant from the picture book.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

What to Look For—Option 2

Some infants may prefer to sit next to you, and other infants will enjoy sitting on your lap. Attempting to share picture books with several early mobile infants together is not effective, especially if/when an infant wishes to help manage the book. In contrast with Option 1, the current option promotes more active engagement of the book while continuing to emphasize the idea that things have names and we point to things of interest.

If the infant does not seem engaged in the book, offer two other books. Encourage the infant to choose one. Watch the infant's reaction to the books to determine which to share next. It takes repeated experiences with books for infants to develop interest in the pictures. Avoid distractions by sharing books in a quiet area.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Go back to a photo the infant enjoyed. Example: If the infant responded positively to the bunny, return to the picture of the bunny and talk about the rabbit hopping. Encourage the infant to point to the bunny and/or parts of the bunny, especially its legs.

Enrichment ■ Provide several animal figures to explore after the book sharing.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant looks at and communicates about pictures in a book that a caregiver points to and names.

Key Concepts
Books

Picture

Point

Materials Needed
Baby's First Book of Birds and Colors by Phyllis Limbacher Tildes

Baby Touch and Feel: Cuddly Animals by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Moo Moo Brown Cow by Jakki Wood

BEGIN: [*Sit with a mobile infant and invite him/her to look at animal pictures in a board book.*

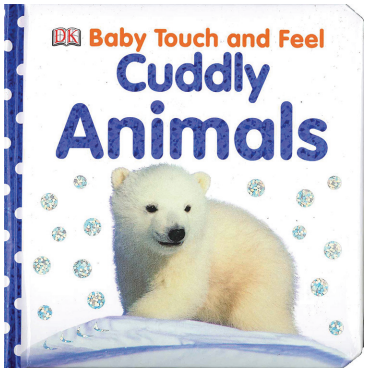
Hold the two books so the infant can clearly see both. Point to each book as you describe it.]

We have two books. One book is about birds. Our other book is about bears.

Would you like to read the book about birds or the book about bears?

[*Observe the infant's reaction to the books to determine if one book holds more interest than the other.*

Describe the book you believe the infant prefers. The model offered below uses the Baby's First Book of Birds and Colors as an example.]



EXPLAIN: This book is about birds.

[*Point to the yellow goldfinch on the cover.*]

Here is a small bird in water. I am pointing to the small bird.

[*Next point to the red cardinal.*]

A red bird is standing near the water. I am pointing to the bird. Let's open our book.

ACT: [*Use your own words to describe pictures. Speak clearly with short phrases. Encourage the infant to touch the book.*

Pause often so the infant can respond with vocalizations and/or actions. Repeat and expand the infant's vocalizations or words. Example: "You are saying 'Bu,' like bird. This is a picture of a little bird."

Point to and name parts of an animal that may be familiar to the infant. Example: "This is the bird's eye. I have eyes. I am pointing to my eyes. Where are your eyes?"

Encourage the infant to point to things of interest in the pictures.

If the infant loses interest, turn to the last page and talk about the final picture.]

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

RECAP: [*Briefly describe the session. Example: "We looked at lots of bird pictures in our book. You made little sounds when you saw the picture of the bird in the water. You pointed to the bird's feet and eyes."*]

What to Look For—Option 3

Even though most infants have not seen many real animals, they are often interested in photographs of birds and other animals. The *Baby's First Book of Birds and Color* introduces color differences that are not necessary to teach to infants. Focus on what the infant can observe in each picture, such as feet, eyes, leaves, or berries. Help the infant become aware that things have names. Also, draw attention to your pointing to pictures or things in pictures.

Pay attention to the infant's reactions to pictures throughout the session. Some infants make sounds when they see things of particular interest. An infant also may look with eyes widened and/or wave his/her hands and arms. Older infants are often interested in and familiar with their basic body parts and will enjoy connecting pictures to their eyes, tummy, ears, and nose.

If a mobile infant suddenly leaves the book sharing activity, wait a few moments and observe his/her actions. The infant may return with an item that has meaning for him/her or relates to the pictures.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Provide ample time for the infant to look at pictures. ■ If the infant begins to get restless, pause and take a deep breath. Focus on being relaxed in the activity. It often helps an infant become calm when his/her caregiver models a calm state. ■ If the infant opens the book to another page, shift focus to describe the picture.

Enrichment ■ Go back to look again at a favorite picture. ■ Encourage the infant to spread his/her arms like wings.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: photo cubes, photos as described

Display 2–3 photos of familiar items where nonmobile infants can see them during periods of alertness. Change pictures every few days. Limit bold visual stimulation at rest times.

Place simple pictures into infant-size photo cubes on five sides. Arrange the cubes where infants who are beginning to crawl or creep will find them. Cubes are often available with a mirror on one side for infants to enjoy.

Post photos of parents where infants can touch them. Mobile infants will enjoy carrying infant photo cubes or four-inch mailing boxes with interesting images attached to each side with clear tape.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: unique items to observe, such as a mobile, bird feeder, and related picture books

Provide unique items for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers to observe in your home. If possible, hang a feeder to attract birds in a place children can easily observe. Provide books with photos and drawings related to the items.

Outdoors, help children focus their eyes to see small objects as well as larger items that are far away. Example: Point to birds and help children learn to focus their eyes to see birds in trees and birds in flight. If young children are unaccustomed to seeing birds, it takes regular practice to focus on them.

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BLOCK 9

Focusing and Remembering

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

A young infant watches a caregiver manipulate a cup and ball.

Key Concepts
Watch

Materials Needed
1 small ball

1 medium stacking cup of a different color

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for a young infant who does not sit independently.

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a secure, comfortable reclining position. Ensure the infant can clearly see you. Smile and make eye contact with the infant. Hold the ball at the infant's chest so he/she can easily see it.*]

EXPLAIN: Look at our ball!

[*Acknowledge the infant's attention to the ball. Example: "You are looking at the ball, Angel."*]

I am going to move our ball. Would you like to watch it move?

ACT: [*Slowly move the ball to one side of the infant. If the infant follows the ball with his/her eyes, begin moving it to the opposite side. If the infant does not follow the ball, slowly return the ball to the center of the infant's chest. Consider moving slightly closer to the infant to make sure the ball is clearly visible to the infant.*

Describe the infant's reaction to the moving ball. Example: "You watched the ball move from one side to the other."

Introduce the cup and hold it at the infant's midline so he/she can easily see it. (Temporarily place the ball on your lap or out of the infant's line of vision so the infant's focus is on the cup.) Name the cup and describe the infant's reaction. Example: "This is a cup. You are looking at our cup!"

Next, turn the cup over and place the ball on top of the cup. Ensure you are holding the ball and cup close to the infant's midline so the infant can clearly see the objects. Describe the new arrangement. Example: "Now the ball is on the cup." Describe the infant's visual attention to the new arrangement. Example: "You are looking at the ball and the cup. The colors are pretty."

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

Slowly move the combined ball-and-cup from side to side. Then hold the combined ball-and-cup in front of the infant for several moments or until the infant begins to look away from the arrangement.

Remove the ball from the cup in front of the infant (so the infant can see your actions). Hold the ball and cup side by side, one in each hand, so the infant can see both objects at the same time. Describe the objects and the infant's reaction. Example: "Now the ball and cup look different. You are looking at the cup. Now you are looking at the ball."

Acknowledge the infant's persistence in looking and focusing on the ball and cup. Example: "You kept your eyes on the ball and cup. You watched the ball and cup move. You used your eyes to follow the ball and cup!"]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you offer a brief summary of the activity. Example: "You looked at the ball. You looked at the cup. Then you looked at the ball and cup together!"*]

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An infant watches a caregiver manipulate a cup and ball, with a follow-up opportunity to play with the toys.

Key Concepts
Watch

Materials Needed
1 small ball

1 medium stacking cup of a different color

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Place an infant who cannot sit independently on your lap at a low table. Place the infant partially sideways on your lap so you can see his/her eyes. Place an infant who can sit independently across from you on the floor.

Introduce the ball by holding it in front of the infant. When you notice the infant looking at the ball, slowly move the ball from side to side. If the infant does not follow the ball, place it briefly in front of the infant and encourage the infant to look at the ball. Describe the infant's response to the moving ball. Example: "You are watching our ball move back and forth."

Remove the ball and introduce the cup. Hold the cup in front of the infant and briefly describe it. Encourage the infant to look at the cup. Describe his/her reaction. Example: "You are looking at the blue cup!" While the infant is watching, turn the cup over on the table and place the ball on top of the cup. Describe the new arrangement and the infant's visual attention to it. Example: "Look, now the ball is on top of the blue cup! You are looking at the ball on the cup." Slowly slide the combined ball-and-cup to one side and then the other while the infant watches. Describe your actions and the infant's response to the moving ball and cup.

Position the infant on your lap so he/she is facing the table. Place both cup and ball on the table in front of the infant and invite him/her to explore the two toys. Describe the infant's actions with the toys. Some infants may copy your previous arrangement with the ball and cup. Others may put the ball in the cup and then take it out. Talk with the infant about his/her actions with the two toys until the infant begins to lose interest.

Acknowledge the infant's persistence during the activity. Example: "You watched the ball move. You looked at the ball on top of the cup. Then you played with the ball. You put the ball inside the cup. We had fun together with the ball and cup!"

What to Look For—Options 1–2

These activities support an infant's persistence in focusing on two objects. A ball and cup are simple objects that offer some complexity and novelty when viewed apart and then together. This brief activity is designed to strengthen the infant's control of visual attention, which is an important element of self-regulation. Watch the infant's visual reactions closely during the activity. Some

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

infants may look intently at the objects and movements, whereas others may turn or look away. Support the infant in returning his/her focus to the ball and cup by keeping the objects in the same place for a few moments. Example: An infant may look at his/her hand for a moment but then return his/her visual attention to ball and cup. Turning or looking away for a relatively sustained period may be a clear sign that the infant is distracted or fatigued. Gently bring the activity to a close when this happens.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ If an infant appears to feel uncomfortable sitting on your lap or sitting independently facing you (Option 2), you may wish to use Option 1 to provide the physical support the infant needs. ■ Adjust the pace of moving the objects in response to the infant's reaction. Some infants may prefer slightly faster or slower movements. ■ Allow the infant to take his/her time. This activity is intended to be a calm experience for the infant. ■ Infants will exhibit more persistence when they are feeling alert and comfortable. Try the activity at a different time during the day if the infant is not initially receptive.

Enrichment ■ Offer additional arrangements for the infant to watch. Example: Put the ball in the cup and then take it out, or roll the ball back and forth on the table or floor. ■ Bring a third object into the activity, such as a small block.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several picture books

Arrange the picture books in a book display that is easy for mobile infants to reach. Sit on the floor close to the infants and invite them to choose a book to look at with you. Open the book and encourage the infants to look at the details in the pictures. Talk with infants about what they see. Acknowledge persistence in looking at the pictures in the book.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: richly illustrated picture book, such as *Bear Snores On* by Karma Wilson

Book sharing is a valuable way to promote a child's skill in focusing. Read the book with all the children in your care. Talk with children about what they see on each page. Invite children to find specific items in the pictures. Older children can name items and toddlers can look and point. Infants will enjoy looking at the pictures and listening to the story and responses of their peers. Some infants may enjoy holding a board book of their own during the activity.

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BLOCK 9

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant watches a caregiver describe his/her own features and actions in a mirror.

Key Concepts
Look

Mirror

Materials Needed
Large mirror

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Cognitive

Invite an infant who can sit independently or with support to join you in front of a large mirror. Encourage the infant to look in the mirror with you. Explain that the infant is seeing you and himself/herself in the mirror. Point to yourself and to your image in the mirror as you explain that we can see you in the mirror. Then point to the infant and to the infant's image in the mirror as you explain that we can see (child's name) in the mirror.

Encourage the infant to look at you in the mirror as you name and point to parts of your body, especially eyes, ears, and nose. Talk and move at a pace that the infant can easily follow. Then move parts of your body in specific ways as you describe each. Possibilities include: a big smile, moving your head up and down, and waving a hand or arm (as if saying "hello" or "goodbye"). The infant may spontaneously mimic your actions. Conclude the session by acknowledging the infant's participation in the activity. Example: "You looked at me in the mirror. I pointed to my ears, eyes, and nose. I waved my hand."

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BLOCK 9

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant looks in a mirror as a caregiver describes him/her as well as any movements.

Key Concepts
Look

Mirror

Materials Needed
Large mirror

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Cognitive

Invite an infant to sit with you near a large mirror. Encourage the infant to look in the mirror with you. Explain that the infant is seeing you and him/herself in the mirror. Then move out of the mirror's range (but remain close by) so the infant sees himself/herself only in the mirror. Describe what you see in the mirror. Example: "I see Sydney in our mirror. Our Sydney is looking at herself in the mirror. She is smiling."

Invite an older infant to point to parts of his/her body that he/she knows. Example: "Where are your eyes?" If you anticipate this will be too challenging, point to parts of the infant's body as you name each. Example: "I am pointing to Sydney's hair. We can see my arm and hand in the mirror. My hand is pointing to Sydney's hair. Now I am pointing to Sydney's arm." The infant may wish to point to parts of his/her own after you point.

If the infant remains interested in looking at himself/herself in the mirror, invite the infant to move some parts of his/her body, such as making a big smile, turning his/her head back and forth, and waving his/her hand. Offer a demonstration of each request for the infant to mimic, if appropriate.

Although the infant may not fully understand that he/she is the child in the mirror, the experience of supportive interactions with you surrounding the mirror can promote the development of social interaction skills.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Mirrors are common in homes and child development centers, of course, and an earlier ELM activity involves a handheld mirror (Block 3, Option 2). Still, most infants do not readily recognize their image in the mirror. What is important in the activity options is your set of supportive exchanges with the infant surrounding the novelty of looking in the mirror—not learning to recognize one's self in the mirror. In Option 1, some infants may look directly at you rather than at your image in the mirror. If this happens, offer a gentle reminder (with pointing) that you and the infant can be seen in the mirror. Positively accept an infant's preference to look at your actions directly instead of in the mirror. Option 1 can be valuable in its own right and also can serve as preparation for Option 2. Option 2 can be easily adapted for use without the mirror if you anticipate the infant is not interested in looking at himself/herself in the mirror.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ In the opening segment of Option 1, offer less cognitive challenge by saying "I see you in the mirror. You are looking in the mirror."

Enrichment ■ Invite the infant to play a game of *Peekaboo* or simple dress up while looking in the mirror during Option 2. Use interesting props, such as hats or scarves, for the infant to wear while looking in the mirror.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of mirrors

Provide opportunities for infants to explore their reflections throughout the day. Infants may enjoy looking into a mirrored toy or watching their peers in a large mirror placed near the floor. Talk with infants about what they see in the mirrors. Although many infants will not recognize their own reflections, they will enjoy looking at the baby reflected back at them!

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: large mirror

A preschool- or school-age child in your setting may wish to join an older infant in Option 2 with your careful guidance. Encourage the older child to engage in simple actions that he/she describes to the infant. The infant may wish to copy some or all of the older child's actions.

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BLOCK 9

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

A young infant stands up with caregiver support while facing the caregiver.

Key Concepts
Standing up

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Peek-a-Boo Forest by Lamaze (cloth book)

Baby's First Book by Baby Einstein (cloth book)

Be Prepared: This activity is intended for an infant who can hold his/her head steadily (typically about three months of age). Select a time of day when an infant is alert.

BEGIN: [*Begin the activity by holding the infant on your lap facing you. Hold both of your hands around the infant's torso. Engage the infant in an exchange of looking and vocalizations. Example: "Hi, Andrew! You are sitting up on my lap." Pause for the infant to respond with eye contact, sound, and/or a movement.*]

I am going to help you stand up.

ACT: [*Lift the infant to an upright position with continual support. Hold the infant so he/she is facing you. While you hold the infant and support most of his/her weight, help the infant feel some body weight with his/her hips, legs, and feet. Example: "Andrew, your feet are on the floor. You are standing up on your feet. I am going to keep holding on to you."*

Very gradually allow a little more of the infant's weight to shift from your supporting hold to the infant's legs, hips, and feet. Continue to hold the infant with your hands securely around the torso.

Continue to describe how the infant is bearing weight on his/her feet and legs. Example: "You are pushing down with your hips, feet, and legs. This is terrific, Andrew!"

If the infant's knees buckle or there are other signs of getting tired, increase your support by lifting the infant slightly.]

ASK: Are you ready to sit down?

[*Watch the infant carefully to determine how long he/she wishes remain in an upright position before sitting. Begin with 10 seconds of upright weight bearing.*

Some infants will enjoy standing upright for longer periods. As an infant gains experience, the activity may increase to 30 seconds.]

ACT: [*Lift and turn the infant to a supported sitting position on your lap. The infant's back will be fully braced by sitting against you. Hold the infant around the torso with two hands.*

If the infant is excited or slightly stressed by the experience, help him/her get calm by rocking slightly and speaking in a quiet voice. Example: "That was exciting for you. Now we can get calm." You also may wish to quietly hum a familiar song.]

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

RECAP: [*With the infant seated on your lap with good support, describe his/her actions. Recognize the infant's efforts. Example: "Andrew, you worked hard to stand on your feet."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

Some infants may wobble a little when they first begin to bear weight on their legs and feet. The sensation of feeling the floor and bearing some body weight may cause a moment of uneasiness for some infants. Reassure the infant by smiling and talking. This is one reason for the infant to face you during the activity. Another reason is for you to fully see the infant's facial reactions. You may notice individual developmental differences in infants of the same age. The supported upright position becomes more enjoyable to infants as they gain strength in the torso, hips, legs, and feet. Some infants may begin to bounce as they bear weight on their legs and feet.

Week by week, infants generally increase the amount of weight they bear in an upright position. You will be able to feel the infant holding his/her weight a little more each week. Never let go of an infant during the activity. Once the infant has developed the skill to stand independently you will see him/her pull to a standing position.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Begin bearing weight activity periods in short intervals, increasing in length over the next two months. ■ To avoid tiring an infant, alternate the weight-bearing position with supported sitting about every 30 seconds, or when you notice any signs of distress.

Enrichment ■ An infant who is experienced in bearing weight upright with support may enjoy holding a small toy or rattle. ■ Sit on the floor by a mirror so the infant can see himself/herself.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

A young infant stands up with caregiver support while facing away from the caregiver.

Key Concepts
Stand up

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This option is for an infant who has had several weeks of practice standing up with firm caregiver support.

After several weeks of standing practice with caregiver support, infants are generally ready to bear more weight while standing up and are sufficiently comfortable with supported standing to look away from the caregiver. This enables the infant to look around the room while standing with caregiver support. This is an exciting experience for most infants.

Sit on the floor near an infant and explain you are going to help him/her stand up. Lift the infant into a standing position on a rug or carpet, with your hands on his/her torso and the infant facing away from you. With your firm grip, the infant may bear some or all weight on hips, legs, and feet while watching friends and others. Talk softly about what the infant is seeing. Keep your hands on the infant's torso at all times.

A predetermined time for standing up is not recommended, although no more than one minute of standing is a useful guideline. Watch carefully for the infant's signs of wanting to stop standing or to change position. Help the infant to sit down or get into a hands-and-knees crawling position if he/she wishes.

What to Look For—Option 2

At this age, there is no need to coax an infant to stand. Some infants may enjoy the sensation of bending hips and knees. Your close observation of the infant is your best guide for when to change or stop the activity. If the infant is smiling and clearly enjoying the standing position, continue for up to one minute. An infant may bend at the knees when he/she needs a break from bearing weight on legs. Let the infant set the pace for the activity. Provide a break of a minute or longer from standing.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ An infant may enjoy taking a break while sitting on your lap to look at pictures in a book. Ask the infant if he/she wants to stand again.

Enrichment ■ Draw the attention of others in your room, especially a caregiver, to the infant standing up. Example: "Look guys! Josie is watching you! Josie is standing up to see you!"

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An older infant stands up with the support of a caregiver and appropriate furniture.

Key Concepts
Pull up

Materials Needed
1 cube chair

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This option is for an infant who can readily stand up with firm caregiver support and is ready to hold onto a piece of furniture while standing or partially standing.

Carry the infant to a cube chair or another appropriate, stable piece of furniture. Place the infant on the floor and then sit or kneel on the floor yourself. Lift the infant into an upright position so his/her tummy is touching the cube chair. Provide most of the infant's support by holding securely around the torso. When you feel the infant begin to support more of his/her weight, decrease the amount of weight you are supporting. Keep both hands firmly on the infant's torso at all times.

Some infants may hold on to the edge of the cube for support. Some infants may enjoy patting the low surface to make a drum-type sound.

When the infant develops an ability to pull up to stand at the cube, arrange a few small toys on the surface. An infant who bears 19 percent of his/her weight will enjoy manipulating and or banging the toys on the low tabletop cube with one hand. Sit very close to prevent the infant from falling.

What to Look For—Option 3

You will observe differences in development of standing and walking. As infants master crawling, they often begin to raise up to a kneeling position to examine play materials. Support each infant's existing skill and be aware of what is likely to come next. Some infants are content to crawl and explore areas of the classroom they can reach. Other infants may develop the strength, and also have a desire, to pull up to standing position sooner. Placing infants in seats they can move with their feet is not recommended.

Learning to stand is very exciting for infants. Offer infants quiet play opportunities on the floor following lively periods of play. Guiding an infant into quiet play is one strategy for supporting Self-Regulation. At this age, the infant depends upon you and other caregivers to support and guide calming down after excitement.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If an infant is able to bear all his/her weight on hips, legs, and feet, reduce your support while keeping both your hands on the infant at all times. After a few moments, guide the infant to a sitting position.

Enrichment ■ The cube chair flipped to the table position provides an excellent support for an infant to take independent steps as part of cruising, which is supported in Block 23.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: 20 books including cloth books, *Peek-a-Boo Forest* by Lamaze, and *Baby's First Book* by Baby Einstein; cube chairs; animal figures; tape; nonbreakable mirror; baby dolls

Arrange spaces for infants to move freely by placing interesting play materials for infants to see. Infants who have begun to roll over may roll to obtain a toy. Use cube chairs or other low surfaces for an arrangement of animal figures. Infants who are pulling themselves to stand will be delighted to find familiar items on a surface they reach.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: colored, nonskid place mats—1 per child

As a supplement to your support for infants to stand up, offer toddlers and preschool-age children an informal gathering that includes putting our bodies in different positions. Give each child a colored, nonskid place mat. Invite children to stand on a place mat for fun pretending. Possibilities include: pretending to be tall like a tree, putting one foot in front of the other to pretend we are riding a skateboard, getting on all fours like an elephant, and putting one foot on either side of the mat to pretend we are batting a ball.

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BLOCK 10 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of infant facial expressions.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of infant facial expressions.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn pages of a book and communicate about pictures of different infant facial expressions.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) An infant looks at an item with high-contrast colors with an opportunity to touch or manipulate the item.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant engages in guided play with sound-making toys.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant engages in guided play with a pop-up toy.

Self-Regulation

Paying Attention

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices focusing on novel sounds made by a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An infant practices focusing on novel sounds and facial expressions made by a caregiver.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant goes on a tour of the room in a caregiver's arms to greet and hear the names of some other infants.

Option 2 (IG) Older infants participate in a brief hello song and hand wave that recognizes each infant in the gathering.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants in a small gathering practice identifying an infant named by the caregiver.

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (OO) A young infant engages in rattle play with a caregiver, with the opportunity to use two hands to reach for a rattle.

Option 2 (IG) Infants practice using two hands to take care of pretend babies.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant practices using two hands to manipulate a large ball.

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

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BLOCK 10

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of infant facial expressions.

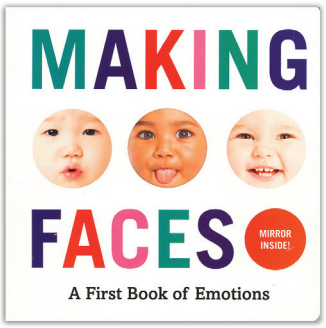
Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Making Faces: A First Book of Emotions by Abrams Appleseed

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

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



EXPLAIN: I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the babies?

[*Pause and watch for the infant's response. The young infant may show interest in the book by vocalizing, turning toward you, gazing at the picture, or reaching out and batting at the book. Respond to the infant's interest in the book sharing. Example: "You are looking at the pictures of babies, Marcus. You are waving your arms and kicking your legs! Let's look at some more pictures."*]

ACT: [*At this age, it is not necessary to read the text. Infants will benefit from hearing you talk about the pictures as you share the book together. Use the following strategies to engage the infant with the book:*

- *Point to and describe pictures. Example: "See this baby? She has big eyes! The baby looks surprised!"*
- *Spend more time talking about the pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at a baby who is sad. The baby has tears. She is crying."*
- *Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You made a happy sound, Luca! I think you like this picture of the silly baby!"*
- *Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book sharing.*

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book together! We talked about different kinds of faces. You smiled and kicked your legs when you looked at the silly baby. We pointed to the happy baby's mouth. This was a fun book to read together!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

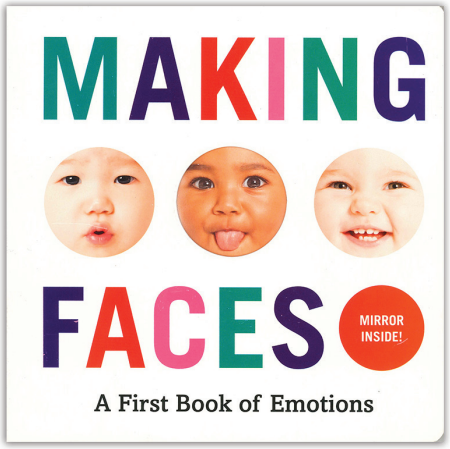
Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of infant facial expressions.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Making Faces: A First Book of Emotions by Abrams Appleseed

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional



Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "See the pictures of the babies? Our book is about baby faces." Open the book and begin looking at the pictures and reading with the infant using the following strategies:

- Invite the infant to help you turn the pages of the book. Turn pages as slowly or as quickly as the infant seems to prefer. It is not necessary to look at each page.
- Point to and describe some prominent features of the facial expression. Example: "Look at this baby. Here are the baby's eyes. The baby has big eyes!"
- Describe what the infant is looking at. Example: "You are looking at a baby who is angry. The baby's eyes are closed. Her mouth is open. The baby does not look happy."
- Talk about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. You may wish to provide additional context or information. Example: "The baby is sad. She is crying. I wonder why the baby is crying."
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are smiling and kicking your legs! You are looking at the happy baby. You are smiling like the baby in the book. I think you are feeling happy!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "You are touching the baby's ears. The baby has earrings in her ears! Where are your ears? Let's find them!"
- Use your voice and facial expressions to relate to book pictures. Example: Make a sad face and use a sad voice when talking about the picture of the baby who is sad. Draw attention to your face and voice. "This baby is sad. She is crying. I am making a sad face, like the baby in our book. I am using a sad voice."
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Kiara. You looked at the pictures of the babies. You smiled, just like the happy baby. You helped me turn the pages! I think you liked this book."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language

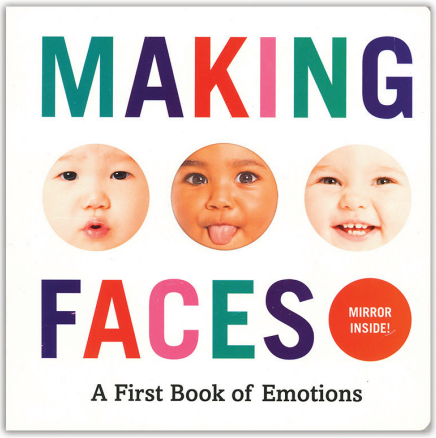
An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn pages of a book and communicate about pictures of infant facial expressions.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Making Faces: A First Book of Emotions by Abrams Appleseed

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to hold the book and turn the pages. Provide assistance if needed by keeping all the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.



Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look at the pictures of the babies. Our book is about baby faces. Let's look at the pictures of babies in our book! Would you like to help me turn the page?" Some infants may help you turn the page, or turn the pages independently. Begin reading and looking at the pictures with the older infant using the following strategies:

- Point to and describe some features of the faces and facial expressions. Example: "These are the baby's teeth. These are the baby's eyes. Let's find the baby's nose!"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you label. Example: "The baby has a mouth. Where is the baby's mouth? You can point to the baby's mouth!"
- Spend more time talking about some specifics of pictures that appear to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are pointing to the silly baby. The baby has a scrunched-up nose and a big smile. The baby is making a silly face! Can you make a silly face?"
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'eyes.' You are pointing to your eyes! You have eyes, just like the baby in the book!"
- Use a voice and facial expression that reflect the picture you are describing. Example: Imitate the face of the baby who looks surprised. Draw attention to your face. Say "I am trying to look surprised, just like the baby in our picture."
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Elias. You pointed to the baby's nose. Then you pointed to your nose. You turned the pages to see the next baby face! We had fun reading this book together."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

The board book featured in the activity options shows five different facial expressions. The contrast of baby faces on white backgrounds can help a young infant focus on each facial expression. Infants are not expected to learn the names and characteristics of each emotion. In general, the book can support an infant's awareness of differences in how we look. The book can also support an infant's early awareness that there are words (names, labels) associated with different expressions. This is consistent with the idea that each person has a name, emphasized in the Social-Emotional activity plan in this block. Look for opportunities to spend a little more time on pictures of interest to the infant and to maybe return to a picture that seemed to heighten the infant's attention. Remember that young infants use actions more than words to communicate their interests, including gazing, pointing, touching, or using his/her hands to bat at or tap the pictures.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Have an object available for the infant to mouth or chew instead of the book.

Enrichment ■ Invite an older infant to join you in imitating happy and sad expressions. The infant may want to look at his/her expression in the mirror at the end of the book.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of books with pictures of babies, several age-appropriate handheld mirrors or toys with mirrors that can be held (such as a block with one mirrored side)

Encourage infants to look at pictures of babies in a book and then look at their own face in a mirror. Hold a mirror for a younger infant to look at. Older infants may enjoy holding their own mirror or mirrored toy. Talk with infants about what they see. Older infants may enjoy pointing to parts of their face that you name, such as eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of books with pictures of children and babies, large mirror, several age-appropriate handheld mirrors, basket

Children of all ages enjoy looking at pictures of children. Arrange the books and handheld mirrors in a basket that you place near a large mirror. Invite children to explore the pictures in the books as well as their own reflections in the large and small mirrors. Talk with children about what they see. Older toddlers and preschool-age children may enjoy making silly faces or comparing their silly face to a peer's silly face. Some children may imitate an expression pictured in a book.

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BLOCK 10

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant looks at an item with high-contrast colors with an opportunity to touch or manipulate the item.

Key Concepts
Look

Touch

Materials Needed
Object with high-contrast colors (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
White on Black by Tana Hoban

Be Prepared: Secure a book or toy that is high in color contrast, such as black and white, and provides tactile or auditory stimulation. Possibilities include a high-contrast rattle, one of the *Wimmer-Ferguson Mind-Shapes* pieces, and one of the *Baby Sees* cloth books by Kenny E. Rettore.

Hold a young infant in your arms and invite him/her to look at and touch the high-contrast book or toy you selected for the activity. Make eye contact and use a friendly voice to create interest in the activity. Hold the book or toy about 12 inches from the infant and pause for him/her to react. Hold the item still so the infant can easily see the color contrasts. After a brief period, describe the item as you move it gently. If you are using a book, describe images on the pages.

Invite the infant to touch or hold the item if he/she has not already touched or grasped it. You may wish to initiate direct contact between the item and infant by touching the infant gently on his/her hand or arm with the item. Describe the infant's exploration of the item, such as feeling the texture of a cloth book, and any sounds the item may make as a result of the infant's actions, such as crinkling noise that occurs when an item is squeezed. Pause frequently so the infant can respond to your comments or movement of the item and hear the item if it is being manipulated. Speak clearly and use the infant's name often.

What to Look For—Option 1

This activity option uses the benefits of contrasting bold colors to promote an infant's visual development. This approach was used in Block 1, Option 1 with the book *Black on White* by Tana Hoban. High-contrast colors are easier for an infant to see than an item with light colors only. Some infants may prefer to look only at your actions with the item. Other infants may quickly grasp the item and maybe move it to his/her mouth for further exploration. The visual stimulation from looking only is valuable. Looking is an important form of inquiry. Touching and manipulating the item can add value to the experience, but they are not essential to learning from the activity.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ When you introduce the item to the infant, look carefully at the infant's reaction and, if necessary, adjust to the infant's preferred distance from the item by moving it closer or further away.

Enrichment ■ If the infant does not seem to notice a feature of an item, such as its texture or a sound it makes when squeezed, gently demonstrate the feature.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant engages in guided play with sound-making toys.

Key Concepts
Hear

Sound

Materials Needed
2–3 soft rattles or chimes (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Select different types of toys (such as a rattle and a chime), and/or toys that make different kinds of sounds.

Sit on the floor facing the infant. Place the toys on the floor in front of the infant. Wait and watch the infant's reaction. Using clear and simple language, describe the infant's reactions to the toys. Encourage the infant to hold one of the toys. If the infant does not begin to manipulate the toys, demonstrate grasping and squeezing one of the toys.

Describe the infant's actions, especially actions that produce a sound. Example: "Riley, you are shaking the orange bird. We can hear the sound of its rattle." Encourage the infant to repeat an action that produces a sound. Example: "We heard a sound when you moved the bird! Let's try it again. Try shaking the bird."

Allow ample time for the infant to explore the toys using his/her own pace. Conclude the activity by describing and showing what happens (a sound) when a toy is manipulated.

What to Look For—Option 2

This activity option promotes the development of an infant's early awareness of cause and effect by providing a clear result (a sound) when the infant moves the toy. This awareness appropriately develops through the infant's exploration, not through formal instruction. An infant may hold out a toy for you to shake or squeeze. Comply with the infant's request by providing a demonstration and then return the toy to the infant with the suggestion that he/she try it.

Some infants may focus on one toy only. Help the infant focus on the sound-making toys by putting away other materials. Too many playthings in an area can be distracting for infants.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Describe the toy the infant selects. Example: "You picked up the orange bird!" ■ Place the materials on a low surface if the infant prefers to stand.

Enrichment ■ Draw attention to differences in the sounds of two toys.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant engages in guided play with a pop-up toy.

Key Concepts
Push
Down
Come back
Pop up

Materials Needed
Infant pop-up toy

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

BEGIN: [*Invite a mobile infant to play with the pop-up toy. Sit on the floor facing the infant. Begin with the push-down items in an "up" position. The description below uses a teddy bear pop-up toy as an example.*]

EXPLAIN: The little bears go into the boxes if we push them down.

[*Demonstrate with one of the little bears. Emphasize the words "push" and "down."*]

We can make a bear come back by pushing this button.

[*Demonstrate by pushing a button and describing how the bear came back. Repeat your demonstration of pushing down a bear and then pushing a button for the bear's return if the infant seems unclear about what happened.*]

ACT: [*Encourage the infant to push down a bear. Provide another demonstration only if necessary. Describe and demonstrate the "return" button if necessary. Offer a little cheer when the bear pops up.*

Describe the infant's actions. Example: "Amari, you pushed the bear into his house."

Recognize the infant's awareness of how the toy works. Example: "You really know how to push the button. The little teddy bear pops up every time!"]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened. Example: "You pushed on the teddy bears and made them all go down into their houses. Then you pushed buttons and the teddies popped out!"*]

What to Look For—Option 3

Look for and enthusiastically acknowledge the infant's discovery of how the pop-up toy works. The pop-up mechanism provides immediate and satisfying reinforcement for the infant's emerging awareness of cause-and-effect actions with the toy. Some infants may clap their hands or vocalize after pushing down a bear or figuring out how to make the bear pop up. Emphasize cause-and-effect connections in your opening demonstration. Example: "First I push the button down. Next, the bear pops out!" But ensure the infant is in control of his/her discovery of how to manipulate the toy. An infant may look to you

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

for help. You may wish to offer another demonstration or simply reassure the infant that he/she can figure it out.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If an infant has difficulty using one hand, suggest he/she try the other hand.

Enrichment ■ Encourage the infant to push down two or three of the items, so most or all are down before pushing the release button for each.

Interest Area

Materials needed: 3 books per child, infant bells or shakers, pop-up toy, musical chime

Place several infant bells or shakers on the floor. Infants will enjoy moving the rattles and hearing the sounds. Small rattles on a blanket may interest younger infants. Depending upon infants' ages, use wrist rattles or larger rattles infants can spin.

Place a variety of sound makers on a mat or rug for infants to discover. Seeing beads inside a clear rattle can support an early mobile infant's developing awareness of cause and effect in shaking the rattle.

Older infants who have participated in Option 3 will enjoy exploring the pop-up toys on their own. On another day, attach a musical chime to a steady handrail for infants to tug to hear a tune.

Family Child Care

Materials needed: heavy-duty quart- or gallon-size zip plastic bag, light corn syrup (or clear hair gel, food coloring, several beads and items, duct tape

A bag similar to the water mat can be easily made for toddlers and preschool-age children. Children will enjoy squeezing the bags and watching items move as colors combine and change. If possible, make a bag for each toddler and preschool-age child. Ask children to sit at a table with you when using the bags to prevent leaks.

Here is one option for making a bag: Pour 1/3 cup light corn syrup (or clear hair gel) into a heavy-duty quart- or gallon-size zip plastic bag. Add two drops yellow food coloring. Next, add one drop of red or blue food coloring to the bag. Place several beads or other items inside the bag. Close the bag, removing most of the air. Place the bag into a second identical bag. Rotate the first bag so the openings of the two bags are on opposite sides. Secure the outer bag with duct tape.

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BLOCK 10

Paying Attention

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

A young infant practices focusing on novel sounds made by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch

Listen

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

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

Smile and encourage the infant to make eye contact with you.]

ACT: I am smiling at you! Do you see my face?

[*Pause and acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at me! You can see that I am smiling at you. Now you are smiling too!"*]

I am going to make a silly noise! You can listen to the sound I make. You can watch my mouth make the sound.

[*Make a soft "raspberry" sound with your mouth and lips while maintaining eye contact with the infant. Describe the infant's response. Example: "You are smiling so big! I think you like the silly sound I made. Do you want me to make the sound again?" If the infant remains engaged, repeat the raspberry sound.*

Depending on the infant's reaction, you may wish to vary the sounds that you make, such as changing your tone or volume. Some infants may move their lips in an attempt to copy you. Others may enjoy watching and listening.

Listen closely for any vocalizations the infant makes in response to your actions. Acknowledge and imitate each vocalization. Example: "I hear you making a cooing sound. I am going to make a cooing sound, too!"

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest, such as looking elsewhere.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you describe what happened. Example: "You watched my face. You listened to me make sounds. Then I copied some of your sounds! We had fun together."*]

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BLOCK 10

Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

An infant practices focusing on novel sounds and facial expressions made by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch

Listen

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite an infant to hear and watch some silly things. Sit across from the infant, who may prefer to stand facing you. Greet the infant by extending both of your hands as an invitation to hold the infant's hands. Draw attention to your big smile. Example: "Good morning, Joaquin! I am happy to see you today. Do you see my face? I am smiling."

Announce that you are going to make a silly noise. Example: "I am going to make a silly noise. You can listen to the sound I make!" Make a soft "raspberry" sound. Pause after the sound to acknowledge and describe the infant's reaction. Example: "You listened to the silly sound I made! You are smiling at me. I think you liked the sound. Would you like me to make another silly sound?" Explain that you are using your mouth and lips to make the silly sounds. Some infants may watch your mouth and lips closely, and others may attempt to imitate you. If the infant remains engaged, repeat several more raspberry sounds that vary in tone and volume. Acknowledge the infant's responses, particularly any vocalizations. Example: "You are moving your mouth and making sounds. You are watching and listening to me. You are making sounds too!"

If the infant continues to remain visually engaged, repeat a raspberry sound immediately followed by a silly face. Comment on how the infant is watching and listening to you. Offer a second raspberry sound followed by a silly face if the infant seems interested.

Imitate any silly sound or face the infant makes. Draw attention to how you are doing what the infant did.

Conclude the activity when the infant begins to lose interest or you anticipate the silly actions may be overstimulating. Acknowledge the infant's focus during the activity. Example: "We had fun watching each other, Luciana. You watched me smile. You listened to my silly sounds. You made sounds too! Thank you for playing with me."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Watch the infant's interest in the activity to determine how much to change your silly sounds and how long to sustain the activity. Repeatedly acknowledge the infant's attention to your sounds and face, as suggested in the activity descriptions. Imitating the infant's sounds and/or facial expressions is a clear way to show you are fully engaged with the infant and supports responsive interactions. Ensure the activity is enjoyable for each infant by keeping your expressions and sounds pleasant and silly. The length of the activity is likely to differ significantly across infants.

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Paying Attention *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Point to your mouth when you explain that your mouth is making the silly sounds. ■ Adapt your approach if you anticipate the activity may be overstimulating to an infant. Make sounds that are soft and lower in tone, offer several sounds only, and offer facial expressions without sounds in the second segment of Option 2.

Enrichment ■ Encourage the infant to make his/her own sounds during the activity. Acknowledge and imitate any vocalizations.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: large mirror

Sit in front of a large mirror with 1–3 infants. Describe what the infants are seeing. Example: "You are looking at Sara. That is you in the mirror! Look, you are smiling. Your face in the mirror is smiling!" Make some of the silly sounds offered in the activity options. Point to and describe how the sounds come from your mouth. Encourage the infants to watch your mouth and lips in the mirror. Have fun with the infant exploring different sounds and faces in the mirror.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several paper towel tubes

Children of all ages enjoy making different silly sounds. Introduce the paper tubes and demonstrate how speaking or making silly noises into the tube can change the sound. Invite interested children and toddlers to talk into a tube. Talk with children about what they hear. Infants and young toddlers will enjoy listening to the sounds of their older peers.

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BLOCK 10

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant goes on a tour of the room in a caregiver's arms to greet and hear the names of some other infants.

Key Concepts
Name

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Hold an infant securely in your arms so he/she can see into your room (not on his/her back, looking up). Take a brief tour to meet several other infants in your room. Focus on infants who are alert and engaged in an activity. Emphasize that everyone has a name. Introduce the infant you are carrying to the infant engaged in an activity. Example: "This is James. He is having a snack. James, this is Samantha. She is going around our room to meet some friends today." Wave at the infant engaged in the activity without compromising your firm hold on the infant in your arms. Walk slowly so the infant has a good chance to look at people and activities in your setting. As you walk to meet another infant, talk about activities or people or objects the infant seems to be looking at. Conclude the tour with a brief summary of who the infant met and what they were doing.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Older infants participate in a brief hello song and hand wave that recognizes each infant in the gathering.

Key Concepts
Name

Song

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Cognitive

Invite several infants to join you for a hello song. Explain that we are going to sing a song about each of us. Begin by pointing to an infant in the gathering and saying his/her name. Example: "This is Makayla. Let's all wave hello to Makayla!" For each infant in the gathering, offer a big smile and wave of your hand as you sing the following words to a tune of your choice:

Hello, (child's name).
Hello, (child's name).
Hello, hello, hello!

Encourage infants to participate by waving to the named peer, saying "hello," and/or singing along. Acknowledge different forms of infant participation in this brief session, including watching you and others.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Older infants in a small gathering practice identifying an infant named by the caregiver.

Key Concepts
Hello
Name
Find

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Cognitive

Invite 4–5 infants to help you find an infant in a small gathering. Say the name of an infant in the gathering and ask where the infant is. Example: "Do you see Ethan? Where is Ethan?" Encourage infants to point to the named peer and for the named peer to wave hello with his/her hand. You may wish to demonstrate waving hello in the first or second "finding" of an infant. Offer a big smile and enthusiastic response to "finding" the infant you name. Example: "Here is Ethan! We found Ethan! Ethan is waving hello to us!"

Immediately after an infant is "found," encourage infants to say the name of the child. Example: "Who did we just find?" Lead infants in saying the name. Emphasize that we are saying names. Example: "Ethan is the name of our friend. Everyone has a name."

After all infants in the gathering have been "found," say your name as someone to find. Example: "Where is Miss Becky? Do you see Miss Becky?" If this request seems especially puzzling to some infants, promptly wave your hand and repeat your name. Example: "Here is Miss Becky. I am Miss Becky! I am waving to you!" Conclude the session by reminding infants that each of us has a name.

What to Look For—Options 1–3

The activity options promote the idea that each child has a name. Infants should not be expected to remember each name. The hello element of each option is a way to recognize the infant as well as the infant's name.

The Option 1 tour of a room is a variation of a Block 1, Option 1 activity in which a caregiver describes parts of a room to an infant. In the current option, the caregiver walks with a young infant securely in his/her arms to meet some other infants in the room. Pay attention to what the infant seems to be looking at so your description focuses on the infant's interest. Consistently say the name of other infants met during the brief tour. Young infants will not understand most of the words you say, but a repetitive routine of saying names can help support the infant's general awareness that people have names.

In Option 2, infants will enjoy hearing their name in the song you offer and being the recipient of an enthusiastic hello wave. This option is a variation of a Block 6, Option 3 activity that invited infants to use a teddy bear to wave to a peer. The current version does not include a teddy bear and encourages infants to directly wave to a peer as part of a brief hello song. Anticipate different types of infant participation. Infants may want you to lead a second round of the song and waving. The first round of the activity may serve as a demonstration of what to do in a second round.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Anticipate that in Option 3, the named infant will be eager to identify himself/herself. An infant's self-regulation skills are at an early stage of development that does not support "sitting still" while others find you in the gathering. Look at other infants in the group when you ask the whereabouts of a specific child, and then look at the named child when his/her presence is identified. Some infants may not readily identify themselves, perhaps because their family calls them by a nickname not used in your room or the infant is still learning his/her name. Supportively remind the infant of his/her name. Also, many infants will not know the names of other infants in the gathering. Repeat the names of infants several times when each is "found."

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Reassure infants in Option 2 that we will sing hello to each infant in our gathering. ■ In Option 3, stand near the named infant after he/she is identified, place your hand over the infant's head, and repeat his/her first name.

Enrichment ■ Combine Options 2 and 3 by offering Option 3 prior to Option 2. In this arrangement, saying hello to each child (Option 2) follows and reinforces the more challenging work of identifying a named infant (Option 3).

Interest Area

Materials Needed: sheer scarves

Provide several scarves for older infants to use in "hiding" from a caregiver and peers. Say the child's name when he/she removes the scarf from his/her face and encourage the infant to say his/her name.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: sheer scarf

Invite all the children in your care to participate in Option 3. Older toddlers and children may enjoy clapping to the simple rhythm during the song. After the song, invite one child at a time to hide under a scarf. Ask "Where is (name of child)?" Toddlers and older children can say their name as they remove the scarf. Infants and young toddlers will delight in playing this version of the *Peekaboo* game.

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BLOCK 10

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

A young infant engages in rattle play with a caregiver, with the opportunity to use two hands to reach for a rattle.

Key Concepts
Watch

Reach

Materials Needed
2 soft rattles

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Communication/Language

Sit on the floor facing an infant who is on his/her back, or place the infant on your lap so his/her back and head are fully supported by your body. Hold one of the rattles where the infant can easily see it. Slowly move the rattle to one side and then to the opposite side. Talk with the infant about the rattle. Depending upon level of development, some infants may watch the rattle, and some infants may attempt to reach for the rattle. Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You reached for the rattle with both hands."

Hold the rattle near the middle of the infant's chest with both of your hands. Encourage the infant to reach for the toy. Touching or grasping the toy may be exciting for the infant. The infant may kick his/her legs in excitement. Typically an infant who can grasp a rattle will bring the rattle to his/her mouth for discovery.

Look for and describe instances of the infant using both hands to reach for or grasp the rattle. If the infant grasps the rattle in one hand and makes no attempt to use both hands at the same time with the rattle, offer a second rattle for the hand the infant is not using to hold the first rattle. This provides an opportunity for the infant to use both hands at the same time, each one for a different object.

Conclude the activity when the infant begins to lose interest or show fatigue. Positively acknowledge the infant's actions with the rattle(s).

What to Look For—Option 1

About four months of age, many infants begin reaching for an object with both hands at the same time. This may or may not occur in the current activity option. Offering a second rattle potentially supports the infant's use of two hands at the same time. The infant may drop the first rattle to hold the second rattle in the same or other hand. Holding two rattles, one in each hand, is more challenging for the infant to manage than coordinating two hands to hold one rattle. It is beneficial for the infant to direct his/her exploration of the rattle. Do not use your hand to position the infant's hand on a rattle. Bring the activity to a close if the infant is getting tired or overstimulated. Help an infant feel calm by repositioning or holding the infant while talking with a quiet voice.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If the infant does not reach for the rattle when you initially present it, lightly touch the rattle to the infant's hand. Recognize that the infant may prefer to watch you manipulate the rattle.

Enrichment ■ In a later offering of this activity, provide a rattle of a different texture or size than provided for the first experience.

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BLOCK 10

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

Infants practice using two hands to take care of pretend babies.

Key Concepts
Hold

In

Out

Materials Needed
Shoebox-size containers—1 per infant and caregiver

Doll or soft animals—1 per infant and caregiver

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Place one doll (or soft animal) in each of the containers, which serve as pretend beds in the activity.

Sit on the floor close to 2–3 infants who are able to sit with or without support. Explain that we are pretending to take care of some babies. The babies are sleeping in their beds. Give each infant a pretend bed with a doll in it. Point to the dolls and pretend beds as you describe each. Pointing is important because the infants will not understand many of the words you use.

Invite the infants to remove the dolls from their pretend beds. Example: "Our babies are waking up! We need to take the babies out of their beds." Demonstrate using two hands to gently take the dolls from their beds.

Next, invite the infants to give their baby a good morning hug. Demonstrate how to give the doll a hug with both of your arms while enthusiastically saying "good morning!" Encourage the infants to hug their doll with two arms.

Finally, explain that our babies are getting tired. It is time to go to bed. Example: "It is night night time. We put our babies in their beds." Demonstrate how to use two hands to gently put the doll in a pretend bed. Encourage the infants to put their doll in the pretend bed.

Describe the infant's efforts with your requested actions. Emphasize use of both hands. Example: "Andre, you are using two hands to hold your baby doll."

What to Look For—Option 2

It will be much easier for an infant to manage the doll by using both hands. Demonstrating how to put the babies to bed may not be necessary. Use the activity plan flexibly, so infants can include their interests in caring for a baby doll. Some infants may enjoy laying down on the floor with the doll to pretend to sleep and wake up.

If infants remain close to you at the end of the activity, extend the play by suggesting that we help the babies dance. Demonstrate using both hands to move a toy doll from side to side.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Assist an infant in managing the box and doll. Example: Hold the sides of the box to provide guidance on where the doll is to go.

Enrichment ■ Offer pretend bottles to older infants for feeding their doll. Demonstrate how to pat the doll's back after the infant feeds the bottle to the doll.

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BLOCK 10

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An older infant practices using two hands to manipulate a large ball.

Key Concepts
Hold

Ball

Materials Needed
8-inch infant ball

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor close to an infant who is able to balance in a sitting position. Offer the infant a ball.*]

Here is a ball for you! You can hold the ball with two hands.

ACT: [*Describe the infant's actions with and responses to the ball. Example: "I see you smiling and patting the ball with two hands. Your hands make a little sound when you pat the ball!"*

Provide time for the infant to explore the ball on his/her own. Then create an opportunity for the infant to reach with both hands by beginning a little game of handing the ball back and forth.]

May I have the ball?

[*Hold your hands out toward the infant. If the infant does not hold the ball toward you, he/she may not understand the game of passing it back and forth. If the infant is willing, take the ball and hold it for a moment and then pass it back.*

Use a cheerful voice to announce the exchange. Example: "Mr. Brendon holds the ball. Next, Mikal holds the ball!" Lead the game of passing back and forth several times.]

You got ahold of our big ball with two hands.

[*If the infant remains interested in moving the ball, explain that you will roll the ball. Encourage the infant to get the ball with both hands.*

Describe the infant's reaction, including how he/she connects with the ball. Example: "You got the ball."

Continue a back-and-forth interaction with the infant. If the infant enjoys getting ahold of the rolling ball, roll it to him/her a few more times. Some infants may be more comfortable handing the ball back and forth to you.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened, especially any uses of both hands with the ball. Example: "You held our ball with two hands. We handed the ball back and forth. You got the rolling ball with two hands."*]

What to Look For—Option 3

In addition to the opportunity to use two hands, this activity option offers an important element of handing the ball back and forth. The turn-taking pattern of the game is comparable to turn-taking the infant experiences when you talk with him/her and wait for a response. A ball rolling toward the infant may be very exciting! As the ball rolls toward the infant, he/she has the cognitive

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

challenge of figuring out how and when to reach for it. Let the infant deal with this problem-solving task. Avoid using the activity as instruction in rolling and catching a ball.

Some infants will be happy to hand the ball back and forth. An infant may not wish to release a ball when he/she first receives it, at least initially. An infant may tap or slap the ball as part of his/her exploration. Remain close and give the infant time to explore the ball independently. Gently reintroduce the idea of handing the ball back and forth by describing and demonstrating what you mean. Positively accept that some infants may not be interested in this plan!

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If the ball rolls away, return it to an infant who does not have the skills to get the ball on his/her own. ■ If the infant has difficulty grasping the ball, use a smaller or softer ball. ■ Help an infant roll a ball to you by sitting closer to the infant.

Enrichment ■ Increase the space between you and the infant so a rolled ball travels further from you to the infant. ■ For a mobile infant, roll the ball away from the infant and encourage him/her to move toward it.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: balls, lightweight sensory tubes, teddy bears and dolls, books

Infants engaged in tummy time will enjoy simply looking at balls placed near them. Balls of several sizes can be displayed where infants can easily reach them.

Provide play materials that infants will enjoy exploring and holding with two hands, such as lightweight sensory tubes or long narrow toys.

Arrange teddy bears and dolls in the boxes used in Option 2 for continued play. To support Option 3, place a ball next to a book opened to a bold picture of a ball.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: ball, bin of infant snap-link beads

Encourage mobile infants and toddlers to manipulate and hold items with two hands. During play periods, sit with children to roll a ball to them. Preschool- and school-age children will enjoy the challenge of carrying one or two items on a tray. Toddlers will enjoy carrying a small container with non-breakable objects inside, such as a bin of infant snap-link beads.

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BLOCK 11 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at high-contrast pictures of familiar objects.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about high-contrast pictures of familiar objects.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn pages of a book and communicate about high-contrast pictures.

Cognitive

Solving Problems

Option 1(OO) A young infant plays with a ball of his/her choice.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant explores an object permanence box with a ball of his/her choice.

Self-Regulation

Getting Calm

Option 1 (OO) An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating music and movement activity with a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity of moving his/her body to music with a caregiver.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver using a novel ball.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant participates in back-and-forth interactions with a caregiver while playing with a ball and a basket.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) A young infant touches a ball with his/her feet.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant explores rolling and catching a ball with a caregiver.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants practice rolling and catching a ball in a small gathering.

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

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BLOCK 11

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at high-contrast pictures of familiar objects.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Look, Look! by Peter Linenthal

Also Promotes
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding infant.*

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

ACT: I have a book for us to read together! Look, there is a picture of a face on the front of our book.

[*Pause and watch for the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the face. You are kicking your legs!"*

Open the book to the first page. Point to and describe parts of the picture. Example: "Do you see the two hands? Here are the fingers. The two hands are reaching. The hands are reaching for a butterfly!"

Use the following strategies to engage the infant with the book:

- *Describe the infant's attention to the book. Example: "You are looking at the children. The children are smiling!"*
- *Spend more time talking about the pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant.*
- *Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are kicking your legs at the picture of the fish. Look at all the fish! The fish are swimming."*
- *Use a soft, soothing voice to add interest and enjoyment.*

Transition out of the activity when infant shows signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We looked at a book with pictures of different things. You liked looking at the pictures. You made cooing noises when you looked at the picture of the children. You kicked your legs when you saw the picture of fish. You looked at the fish swimming for a long time."*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about high-contrast pictures of familiar objects.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Look, Look! by Peter Linenthal

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit on your lap or next to you to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging infant to look at the picture with you. Explain there is a picture of a face on the cover of our book. Open the book and begin looking at the pictures and reading the text, using the following strategies:

- Invite the infant to help you turn the pages of the book. Be flexible about this arrangement. The infant may skip some pages. The book does not offer a plot and it is easy to move around pictures. The infant may turn some pages more quickly than others.
- Point to and name what's in the picture, including its parts. Example: "This is a cat. The cat has a tail. Here is the tail. The cat also has whiskers. Look at the cat's long whiskers! Here are the cat's eyes. I am pointing to the cat's paws."
- Pause and talk about the pictures the infant shows particular interest in. You may wish to provide additional context or information. Example: "You are looking at the moon in the sky. Look at all the stars! The sky is dark because it is nighttime."
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are touching the picture of the race car. You are smiling! I think you like this picture of the race car."
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "These are hands. There are fingers on the hands. Let's look at our hands. I have fingers on my hand. You have fingers on your hand!"
- Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book sharing.
- Recognize infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun looking at the pictures in this book together, Carter. You touched the picture of the race car. You smiled at the children! You helped turn the pages!"

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to hold and turn pages of a book and communicate about high-contrast pictures.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Look, Look! by Peter Linenthal

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand while you read. Encourage the infant to hold the book and turn its pages. Provide assistance if needed by keeping all the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages. Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to and describe the face shown on the book cover. Use the following strategies to engage the infant with the book:

- Point to and name objects in the pictures. Example: "This is a sun. The sun has a face! Here are the eyes. Here is the nose. Look at the smiling mouth! The sun looks happy!"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you name. Use objects and names that you anticipate the infant knows. Example: "I see a picture of a moon in the sky. Do you see the moon? You can point to the moon!"
- Describe what the infant is looking at and provide additional information. Example: "You are looking at the pictures of the flowers. The flowers have something called petals. Here are some petals."
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'night night.' You are looking at the picture of the moon in the sky. Yes, it is nighttime!"
- Encourage the infant to connect book information to his/her own experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "This is a car. We have a toy car in our room. You like to play with our toy car."
- Follow the infant's lead in how quickly or slowly the pages are turned. It is fine if the infant skips some pages. The book is not organized by a plot.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book sharing. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Maya. You pointed to the stars in the sky. You turned the pages to see what was next! We had fun reading this book together."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

The board book featured in this activity plan continues a Block 10 focus on high-contrast pictures that support a young infant's visual development and offer bold images for discussion. Many items will be familiar to some older

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

infants, who will benefit from your pointing to and naming parts of an object. See examples in Options 2 and 3. Look for an opportunity to point out the words on a page to an older infant, as suggested in the Enrichment tip. Some of the text in the book easily stands out through its placement in curving red lines. It is inappropriate to provide instruction in print at this young age, of course, but you can support an infant's developing awareness of print and pictures by simply pointing to the red text as you read it.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Point to and name parts of the face on the book's cover, especially eyes, nose, and mouth. ■ Provide a book-related object, such as a toy car or cat figure, for a younger infant to hold during and after the book sharing. ■ At the conclusion of the book sharing, return to pictures that are of interest to the infant.

Enrichment ■ Draw an older infant's attention to words shown in a curving red arrangement on a page. Explain that these are words. Words tell us things.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several books in black and white or contrasting colors

Provide opportunities for infants to look at high-contrast pictures in books throughout the day. Infants may enjoy looking at the pictures during tummy time, while waiting to eat, or during floor time. Talk with infants about what they are looking at.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Look, Look!* by Peter Linenthal, large piece of white paper affixed to a low table, black tempera paint in two shallow trays, art smocks, several toy vehicles with textured tires/wheels

Extend the book content with older toddlers and preschool-age children by inviting children to dip a vehicle into paint and then "drive" the car across the paper, leaving black tire marks. Younger toddlers may participate with the painting while one-to-one with a caregiver.

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BLOCK 11

Solving Problems

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills
A young infant plays with a ball of his/her choice.

Key Concepts
Look
Reach

Materials Needed
3 activity balls (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: Select clear activity balls with objects inside that provide visual interest. Balls that are two and a half inches in diameter are appropriately sized for this age.

BEGIN: [*Hold a nonmobile infant on your lap and invite him/her to play with a ball. Provide support for his/her head, neck, and torso as needed. Some infants will be able to sit erect with one of your hands supporting his/her chest and torso. Use the infant's name as you talk with him/her and offer a few moments for the infant to get comfortable.*]

ACT: [*Hold two balls in your palm about 12 inches from the infant. Allow ample time for the infant to look at the balls. Observe whether one ball seems to attract his/her attention. Give just enough assistance for the infant to get ahold of the ball he/she seems to prefer.*

Describe the ball chosen by the infant. Example: "You looked at this ball. Then you reached for the ball. Something is spinning inside the ball."

Give the infant time to explore the ball. If the ball drops, pick it up and hold it for the infant to see. Tip the ball to activate the moving toy inside. Point to and comment on the moving part inside. Example: "A little toy is moving inside our ball."

If the infant remains interested, offer another set of two balls: the one not selected at the beginning of the activity and the third ball not initially offered. Help the infant select one of the balls for exploration, using procedures described above. Describe the selection and the infant's actions with the ball.]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe what happened, pointing to balls involved in the activity. Example: "You looked at two balls. The balls have toys that move inside. You reached for one of the balls. You used your hands and your mouth to find out about the ball."*]

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

What to Look For—Option 1

Infants will differ in how much they look at the two ball possibilities. You may wish to briefly and gently shake each ball separately so it is clear there are two balls. If you hold two balls stationary in your hand during the presentation, a young infant may think the two balls form one object. Most infants will look at the ball and feel the shape and hardness with their mouth. Some infants may look closely at the inside of the ball, especially if the moving part has strong visual appeal. Some infants may tire after exploring one ball. Infants sometimes begin to fuss after stimulation and need a structured calm down time. End the activity by talking to the infant and repositioning him/her if needed. Standing and holding the infant as you shift your weight from one foot to the other in a sway motion can help some infants become calm. Other infants are attuned to sound and begin to calm when you talk to them quietly.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ For an infant who can explore only by looking, present one ball and describe the way the object inside moves and/or the rattle sounds.

Enrichment ■ Sit on the floor with the infant well supported on your lap. Place several balls on the floor where the infant can see them move. The moving actions may prompt the infant to prefer to explore one ball.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

An older infant explores an object permanence box with a ball of his/her choice.

Key Concepts
Look
Reach
Hole

Materials Needed
Object permanence box
1 white ball
1 red ball

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Where's Spot? by Eric Hill

Sit on the floor next to an infant and invite him/her to play a game with you. Place the object permanence box on the floor so the infant can easily see the box, including the tray portion of the toy. Point to and demonstrate features of the box as you describe the hole, door, and tray. Infants may be interested in looking into the box or reaching into its hole. Imitate the infant's action. Affirm and describe the infant's actions. Examples: "You can reach into our box." "You can look in our special box. The box is empty."

Next, set the two balls in front of the infant, one at a time, and encourage him/her to select one. The infant may be excited to put the ball through the hole before you describe his/her choice. Describe the infant's pick and actions. Example: "Marco, you reached for the white ball right away. Then you dropped the ball into the hole!"

After a ball is put in the hole, the infant may look into the box through the top or may see the ball roll out the door onto the tray. Allow time for the infant to figure out what has happened. If the infant does not reach for the ball on the tray, ask him/her "Where did the ball go?" Use hand gestures to complement your words. Wait for the infant to respond.

Describe things the infant sees. Example: "Diego, your ball rolled out. There it is!"

Repeat the sequence a few times, drawing attention to the ball going in the hole and out the little door.

What to Look For—Option 2

This activity supports cognitive development in two ways: the infant is encouraged to make a choice between two balls and to explore what happens to a ball when it is placed in a special box. Understanding that an object exists when it cannot be seen (known as object permanence) takes time to develop. Look carefully for signs of its development in the infant and provide appropriate support. Example: Demonstrate how the box works (see Extra Support tip) if it appears the infant is confused about how a ball can be dropped in the hole of the box.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

The infant may be interested in dropping a ball in the hole but not in looking for it. Ask where the ball went, as suggested in the activity plan description, but do not push the question if the infant continues to show little interest in discovering where the ball went. The development of object permanence cannot be hurried. Simply talk with the infant about his/her version of the activity, giving words to each action.

If an infant shows no interest in the box, use the balls to play with him/her in other ways, such as handing them back and forth or rolling. Offer the infant two balls and encourage him/her to select one.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Demonstrate use of the ball with the object permanence box. ■ Substitute a favorite small toy for a ball if the infant seems uninterested in the ball but the box has some appeal.

Enrichment ■ Cover one of the balls with a cloth after it is retrieved from the box. Offer the infant a nudge to look under the cloth if he/she does not do so after you hide the ball.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: small toys, cloth, mirror, small dish, stacking ring, books with flaps (such as *Where's Spot?* by Eric Hill), laundry basket, lightweight ball, cardboard box

Play *Peekaboo* with a nonmobile infant during care routines. During playtime, draw an infant's attention to a partially covered toy and lift the cover. Another day, play a peek game with a mirror. Cover a small mirror with a cloth and then remove the cover so the infant can see himself/herself.

For an early mobile infant, partially cover a toy for the infant to discover. Place a small dish over a stacking ring. Share books with flaps, such as *Where's Spot?* by Eric Hill.

Cut 1–2 holes in the top of a cardboard box. At one end, cut an opening where infants may see and retrieve toys. Provide balls to drop through the holes. Mobile infants will enjoy dropping balls and other small toys into the top of the box and retrieving them from the side.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: large mailing tubes, balls or small vehicles, toy moose, *Animal Camouflage* by Sarah Dennis, *Animals in Camouflage* by Phyllis Limbacher Tildes

Reinforce object permanence understandings of toddlers and preschool-age children with large mailing tubes they can use with balls or small vehicles. Children may enjoy making tunnels with tubes.

Preschool-age and older children enjoy games played repeatedly. A fun way to begin the week is *Moose is Missing*, a game that involves hiding a toy moose and celebrating when children find the moose. Children also will enjoy taking a turn to hide the moose toy.

School-age children may be interested in learning about how animals use camouflage to hide. The books *Animal Camouflage* by Sarah Dennis and *Animals in Camouflage* by Phyllis Limbacher Tildes offer useful information and pictures. ELM's activity plans in Science for preschool-age children also offer an introduction to animal camouflage.

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BLOCK 11

Getting Calm

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating music and movement activity with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
Gentle instrumental music

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

BEGIN: [*Hold a young infant in your arms with his/her head well supported in the bend of your arm, ensuring the infant can clearly see you. Invite an older infant to sit on your lap. Sit within easy reach of the music source.*]

ASK: Are you ready for some music?

[*Pause and acknowledge infant's response. Example: "I see you are looking at me. I think you would like to listen to some music. Let's move a little bit while we listen."*]

ACT: [*Play soft, instrumental music and lightly sway the infant from side to side. Smile and make eye contact with the infant. If he/she seems to enjoy the movement, gradually increase the amount of swaying.*

If the infant develops a frown or appears at all distressed, eliminate or reduce the amount of swaying or stop the music. You may wish to provide a mildly stimulating experience for the infant by playing the music without the movement or offering gentle movement without music.

Acknowledge the infant's reactions. Example: "You have a big smile! You like our moving to the music!"

After several minutes of music and/or movement stimulation, turn off the music and explain that it is time for us to get calm now. Reposition the infant to provide a clear signal that the activity is over. Provide comfort, such as patting on the back, quietly singing a familiar song, and/or offering soft-voice reminders that it is time to rest.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you describe what happened. Examples: "We had fun moving with the music, Akilah! You had a big smile. Then the music stopped. I held you while you got calm again." "You didn't like moving to the music, Darius. We sat and listened to the music instead. You felt calm and happy when we were sitting."*]

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BLOCK 11

Getting Calm *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity of moving his/her body to music with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Music

Calm

Materials Needed
Gentle instrumental music

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit near you on the floor to listen to music. Sit facing the infant and within reach of the music player. Offer a big smile and explain what will happen. Example: "We are going to listen to music. We are going to move our bodies with the music! Are you ready?" Point to your ears when you mention listening to music. Move your body slightly when you describe moving your body. Do not pursue the music and movement if the infant shows clear signs of no interest.

Begin playing the music and demonstrate gentle movements by swaying your upper body back and forth. Smile and encourage the infant to do the same with his/her body. Many mobile infants will naturally begin to move their head and upper body with music. Offer additional prompting and demonstration, if necessary. Some infants may enjoy standing and holding both of your hands while moving his/her whole body with the music. End the activity if the infant shows signs of disinterest or distress at any time.

Describe the infant's actions. Examples: "You had fun moving your body with the music, Brody!" "You didn't feel like moving your body today, Siri. You enjoyed sitting to listen to the music."

After several minutes of music and movement, ask the infant to sit and rest with you. The infant may want to sit near you or on your lap. Provide quiet time for the infant to calm him/herself. If needed, support the infant by patting his/her back, quietly humming or singing a favorite song, and/or offering gentle reminders that it is time to rest. Recognize and acknowledge the infant's behavior as he/she becomes calm after the activity. Example: "You had fun moving your body with music. Now you are sitting with me and resting. We are feeling calm."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

An infant may signal that he/she would like the music and movement to continue. A younger infant may kick his/her legs, coo, or laugh aloud. An older infant may say "more" or show displeasure with your announcement that it is time to rest. Remember that the ultimate goal of the activity is to practice calming down. Continuing the music and movement may lead to overstimulation and greater challenge in getting calm.

Your most important role in the activity is to help the infant calm him/herself. Watch the infant's responses to a strategy (or strategies) you use carefully. Give the infant a few moments of quiet time to respond to a strategy before offering help. Some infants may move toward a calm state independently with your indication that the music is over. Others may need additional support to become calm.

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ In Option 1, first offer music and then introduce swaying, rather than beginning with both music and swaying. ■ If an infant needs extra support to become calm, consider playing slower, soothing music as you hold or sit near him/her.

Enrichment ■ If the infant responds positively to gentle music, consider offering livelier music in a repeat of the activity. ■ Invite 2–3 older infants who have previously demonstrated emerging skill in getting calm to participate together in Option 2. Infants may watch one another and choose to move or "dance" their bodies in different ways.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: none

During floor play, engage infants in songs or rhymes that involve gentle movement, such as "Row, Row, Row, Your Boat." Slowly sing one verse of the song and invite one or more infants to gently sway forward and back. You may wish to sit with one infant on your lap at a time to sway with you. Encourage the infants to calm down after the exciting activity using one or more of the strategies suggested in the activity options.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

Include toddlers or preschool-age children in Option 2, especially if you anticipate their involvement will informally demonstrate for older infants how to get calm.

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BLOCK 11

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver using a novel ball.

Key Concepts
Look
Listen
Ball

Materials Needed
Novel ball (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Secure a ball with interesting features that an infant can easily grasp, such as the Oball Rollin Rainstick Rattle.

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a comfortable reclining position.*

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Good morning, Mason! I am happy you are here today. You look ready to play!" Acknowledge the infant's reactions, including any vocalizations and/or facial expressions. Examples: "You are smiling, Aria! I smiled at you, and you are smiling at me!"

Hold the ball about 12 inches from the infant, at his/her midline.]

ACT: Look, I have a ball for us to play with! Listen to the sound our ball makes. Maybe you would like to touch and hold the ball.

[*Gently shake and move the ball slowly from side to side to attract the infant's attention. Watch for the infant to respond by gazing, batting at, or reaching for the ball.*

Describe the infant's reaction to the toy. Examples: "Your eyes got wide when you saw our toy. You are looking at the ball." "You kicked your feet when you heard the rattle inside the ball, Muhammad! I think you like our ball."

Move the ball close to the infant so he/she can touch or grasp it. Describe your action. Example: "I will hold the ball close, so you can touch it." Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You reached for the ball as soon as you saw it, Lily! I moved it closer. Now you are holding it."

Watch for and acknowledge vocalizations and/or facial expressions.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of the interaction. Example: "We had fun with a ball, Mason. You moved the ball and listened to the sound it made!"*]

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant participates in back-and-forth interactions with a caregiver while playing with a ball and a basket.

Key Concepts
Ball

Basket

Materials Needed
Soft, medium-size ball

Large basket

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit with you on the floor to play with a ball. Place the basket between you. Name the basket for the infant. Introduce the ball, and invite the infant to hold and explore the ball. After several moments, encourage the infant to drop the ball into the basket. Enthusiastically acknowledge the infant's actions. Example: "Nicholas, you put the ball in the basket! Look, the ball is in the basket. Yay, Nicholas!"

Remove the ball from the basket. Describe your actions and their results. Example: "I took the ball out of the basket. Look, the basket is empty!" Gently place the ball in the basket and describe your action. Invite the infant to take the ball out of the basket. Then explain that it is the infant's turn to put the ball back in the basket. Demonstrate putting the ball in the basket if it appears the infant is not clear about your suggestion.

Promote a back-and-forth pattern with the ball with the following strategies:

- Provide clues about who does what.
- Describe what is happening. Example: "You dropped the ball in the basket. I dropped the ball in the basket! We are taking turns putting the ball in the basket."
- Recognize the infant's actions. Example: "You clapped your hands when you dropped the ball into the basket! Clap, clap, Brooklyn! You put the ball in the basket."

Pause for the infant to start or contribute to the exchange. Maintain eye contact. Remember to use facial expressions to communicate with the infant. Focus on the interaction with the infant more than getting the ball into the basket.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Both options use an object(s) to facilitate interactions between you and an infant. Look for ways to demonstrate your responsiveness to the infant's actions and attention to you. In Option 1, the young infant will benefit from your gentle comments about how he/she is playing with the novel ball, and some freedom to explore the ball as he/she wishes. In Option 2, your careful guidance is needed for an older infant to experience a back-and-forth exchange with the ball and basket. Be prepared for the infant to be interested in doing one action only, such as placing the ball in the basket, but not retrieving the ball from the basket, and perhaps only one round of handling the ball. The length of each activity is likely to range considerably across infants and situations. In Option 2, an infant may be interested in carrying the ball around the room and not dropping it in a basket. At this young age, children cannot be expected to understand the concept of taking turns, but

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Option 2 has potential to support the development of early awareness of how back-and-forth exchanges can work. Your being tuned into the infant is central to the success of each option.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Your short, clear comments actively support the infant's language skills. But infants are unlikely to understand most of the words you say. Remember to accompany your words with demonstrations, partial demonstrations, or hand gestures.

Enrichment ■ Option 2 can be pursued with two infants at the same time.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of balls in different sizes, textures, and colors, several containers to fit one or two balls (such as a bucket, basket, or large bowl)

Provide opportunities for infants to play with balls and containers. Infants may enjoy exploring the balls individually, or practicing filling and dumping the containers. Infants may enjoy watching their peers engage in the materials in similar ways. Describe infants' actions with the balls. Recognize facial expressions and repeat and extend infants' vocalizations.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: medium-size soft ball

Invite older children to play a game of passing the ball to a named peer. Encourage children to sit in a loose circle and pass the ball to the child you name. The children may hand the ball to the peer or roll the ball across the circle. Invite children to repeat the name of the child holding the ball. Ensure that each child has a turn to hold the ball and hear his/her name spoken. Babies may enjoy holding an age-appropriate ball and hearing their name spoken during the activity.

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BLOCK 11

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

A young infant touches a ball with his/her feet.

Key Concepts
Ball

Materials Needed
1 6–8″ cloth ball

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Communication/Language

Greet an infant who is alert and ready for some activity. Position the infant on his/her back on a carpet or mat. Sit on the floor facing the infant. Talk with the infant in a cheerful manner and pause for him/her to react by moving or looking.

Hold the cloth ball for the infant to see. Explain the infant is looking at a ball. Then touch the ball against the bottom of the infant's feet. Hold the ball steady in one place where the infant can reach it with both feet. The infant may push against the ball with both feet, stretching one or both of his/her legs. If the infant begins to kick the ball, encourage him/her by smiling and describing his/her kicking.

Bring the activity to a close after a minute or when the infant signals a need for change by looking away or fussing. Hold the infant in his/her preferred position. Sometimes infants prefer a holding position that allows looking outward.

What to Look For—Option 1

Talking about the infant's foot contact with the ball can be a valuable part of this activity. Even though the infant does not understand specific words, he/she will develop an awareness that his/her actions can elicit talking. The infant may also feel a sense of security hearing you speak in a warm and friendly manner.

A nonmobile infant may shift focus from touching or pushing the ball with his/her feet to looking at you. If the infant shows no interest in touching the ball (or your hand) with his/her feet, sit with the infant well supported to show and talk with him/her about the ball. Short periods of play may last less than one minute. Infants are never expected to throw or kick a ball.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Use your hand instead of the ball for the infant to touch or push with his/her feet.

Enrichment ■ Move the ball a little closer to the infant's feet to promote a stronger push and/or a slight bending of the infant's knees.

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BLOCK 11

Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An older infant explores rolling and catching a ball with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Push
Ball
Roll

Materials Needed
1 ball made of soft material

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional
Cognitive
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This activity is designed for an infant who is able to sit unsupported with good balance.

BEGIN: [*Invite an infant to sit on the floor close to and across from you. Place the ball in the infant's two hands.*]

Here is a ball for you to hold with two hands. We can roll our ball!

ACT: [*Wait for the infant to explore the ball independently. Describe the infant's responses to the ball. Example: "I see you are moving the ball! It looks like you want to push the ball."*]

Do you want to play a game with me?

[*Hold your hands out toward the infant and encourage him/her to hand the ball to you. Next, gently roll the ball toward the infant.*

Describe each key action with the ball. Examples: "I push the ball. It rolls to you." "Great, you got the ball!" Encourage the infant to push the ball forward. Use your hands to demonstrate the motion as you say "push the ball."

Encourage the infant to complete two exchanges of the ball with you by making the game lively and fun.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened. Example: "We rolled the ball! You pushed the ball to me. You used two hands to get the ball."*]

What to Look For—Option 2

Infants will differ in their experiences with a ball. Some may associate holding the ball with throwing the ball. The activity plan emphasizes rolling (pushing) the ball, not throwing. Pay close attention to the different sets of emerging skills involved in holding, pushing/rolling, and catching a ball. Catching and pushing (rolling) skills do not always develop at the same time. Catching a ball involves watching and anticipating when the ball is close enough to touch or grab. Pushing a ball is easier to do with both hands than with one hand. Eye-hand coordination is involved in each action. You may wish to make accommodations, such as moving closer to the infant, that provide challenging yet achievable tasks for the infant. Promote the use of both hands, beginning with the presentation of the ball as suggested in the opening segment of the activity. The activity is intended to offer exploratory experiences with a ball, not formal instruction in rolling and catching.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Help the infant position himself/herself to capture a rolled ball. Encourage the infant to sit balanced with legs apart and arms forward. ■ Move closer to the infant if it appears it is too challenging for the infant to anticipate when the ball might reach him/her. ■ Offer reminders, such as "Here it comes." ■ Show an infant how to push the ball forward with two hands to make it roll. Emphasize "push" by demonstrating with your hands as you say the word.

Enrichment ■ Adapt the game for an infant who prefers to stand. Roll the ball toward the infant and encourage him/her to get it with two hands. ■ The activity can easily be adapted for two infants who can readily manage a ball.

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BLOCK 11

Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development
Older infants practice rolling and catching a ball in a small gathering.

Key Concepts
Ball
Roll
Push

Materials Needed
1 beach ball

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional
Cognitive
Communication/Language

Invite 2–3 mobile infants to sit on the floor with you. Welcome each infant by name. Roll the beach ball toward one of the infants. Use a repetitive phrase with the rolling action, such as "I roll the ball to (child's name)." Encourage the infant to push the ball toward you. Say your repetitive phrase for the infant's action, such as "(child's name) rolls the ball to me." Get the ball and roll it to the next infant while saying your repetitive phrase. You may wish to demonstrate how to push the ball with both hands. Infants are not expected to remember what to do with the ball when it reaches them. Provide gentle clues throughout the activity. The enjoyment is pushing the ball and watching it roll while interacting with you.

What to Look For—Option 3

You will notice the infants using one hand or both hands to push the ball.

A beach ball is used in this activity because it is lightweight and will roll slowly, giving an infant a moment to prepare to touch or catch the ball with both arms or hands. Your repetitive phrase also provides a friendly notice that a ball is on its way. Emphasize the concepts of "push" and "roll." The game has a back-and-forth pattern similar to conversation. If the activity is not working because an infant(s) wants to hold the ball, use a second ball with the infant(s) who is interested in pushing and catching the ball you roll. Positively acknowledge an infant's preference for holding and looking at a ball. If an infant prefers to stand, encourage him/her to bend to use his hands for pushing and catching the ball. No kicking or use of legs/feet with the ball should be allowed.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Sit closer to infants if distance seems to cause too many challenges in pushing and/or catching. ■ Let some air out of the beach ball if it is rolling too fast.

Enrichment ■ If infants find it relatively easy to push and catch the ball, encourage them to push the ball to one another (rather than to you only).

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: balls of various sizes, laundry basket

Nonmobile infants will enjoy holding small balls when supported in a sitting position on your lap. Position nonmobile infants so they can see one another. Arrange a few balls of different sizes on the floor near nonmobile infants for them to see.

Place balls made for infants in easy-to-reach places for early mobile infants. Balls made for youth or adult sports are not appropriate for infants because they are too hard and heavy.

Encourage mobile infants to drop a ball into a laundry basket. A few minutes of exciting ball play will be fun for infants. Bring the ball play to a close by using a quieter voice and asking the infants to put their balls into the bag.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: lightweight balls

Toddlers may enjoy participating in Option 3 with older infants. School-age children will enjoy practicing toss and catch with smaller balls that are soft on their hands. Preschool-age children will enjoy playing with balls that are easy to hold and manipulate, but they should not be expected to manage a game of catch on their own.

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BLOCK 12 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at pictures about saying goodnight.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about saying goodnight.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book, and communicate about saying goodnight.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) An infant engages in cause-and-effect play with a water mat.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant engages in cause-and-effect play with a ball and toy dump truck.

Self-Regulation

Focusing and Remembering

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in guided play that supports persistence in exploring a novel fish toy.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant participates in guided play that supports persistence in moving toward, grasping, and exploring a novel fish toy.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver using fabric stacking rings.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a back-and-forth interaction with a caregiver while playing with stacking rings.

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in hand and arm movements at and across the midline guided by a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant participates in guided play that encourages bringing both hands, or crossing both hands, at the midline.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants participate in a game of reaching across the midline to catch floating toys in a water tub.

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

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BLOCK 12

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to a caregiver's voice and looking at pictures about saying goodnight.

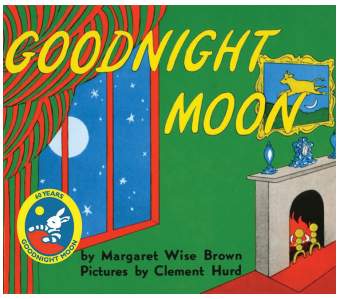
Key Concepts
Book
Look
Goodnight

Materials Needed
Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown

Also Promotes
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

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



ACT: I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the moon in the sky?

[*Pause and watch for infant's response. Respond to infant's interest in the book sharing. Example: "You are looking at the moon on our book, Jordan. I can hear you cooing!"*]

Our book is about going to bed and saying goodnight! A bunny in our book says goodnight to a lot of things.

[Open the book to the first page. Point to and describe the bunny. Example: "This is the bunny. The bunny is going night night. The bunny is in his bed."

Use the following strategies to engage the infant with the book:

- *Look at and talk about pictures that you think will be of most interest to the infant. The book is longer than most infants may want to read. Describe what the infant seems to be looking at. Example: "You are looking at the red balloon. The balloon is floating on a string. I think you like balloons."*
- *Acknowledge gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are waving your arms at the picture of the little house. Goodnight, little house!"*
- *Use your voice to add interest, such as a slightly higher pitch and a slower tempo, as you talk about the pictures. Emphasize goodnight.*

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: Describe some highlights of the book sharing. Example: "We read a book about going to bed and saying goodnight! A bunny said goodnight to a lot of things! We liked the pictures of the bunny's room, the red balloon, and the little house. We said goodnight to lots of things in our book!"]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

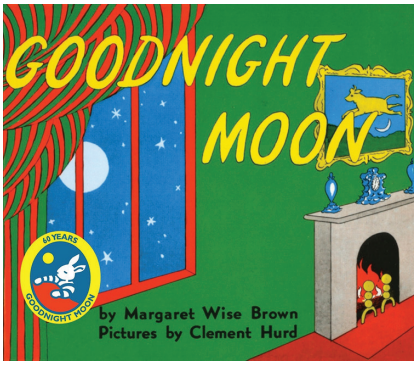
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about saying goodnight.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Goodnight

Materials Needed
Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to and describing the picture of the moon. Explain that we can see a moon at nighttime. Our book is about a bunny saying goodnight to many different things. Use the following strategies to share the book with the infant:



- Invite the infant to help you turn the pages. Be flexible about the pace of page turning. The book is longer than some infants may wish to pursue. It is fine to skip pictures.
- Describe what infant seems to be looking at. Point to items that you describe. Example: "This is a picture of the bunny's room. There are green walls and a red floor. Here are curtains! Can you see the moon peeking out?"
- Spend more time talking about pictures that appear to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the kittens. Oh my, what are the kittens doing? They are playing with the big bunny's yarn. The kittens are having fun."
- Acknowledge gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are touching the picture of the cow. You are smiling! This is a silly picture. The cow is jumping over the moon!"
- Help infant connect book information to his/her own experiences. Example: "Here is the bunny's bed. Do you sleep in a bed like the bunny?"
- Use your voice to add interest to the book reading. Emphasize the word goodnight.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book sharing. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Trinity. You helped turn the pages. You looked at the pictures of the bunny's room. You touched the picture of the cow. You smiled when I said goodnight to all the things in the bunny's room."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

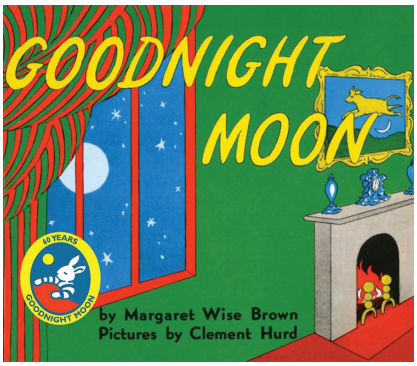
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language

An older infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to hold and turn the pages of a book, and communicate about saying goodnight.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Goodnight

Materials Needed
Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Invite an infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand close while you read. Invite the infant to hold the book and turn the pages. You may wish to keep all the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages. Follow the infant's preference for how quickly or slowly to turn the pages. The book has more pictures than the infant may wish to look at. It is fine to skip pages.

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to and describe the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look, do you see the moon in the window? The sky is dark and the moon is out. Our book is about going to bed and saying goodnight! A bunny says goodnight to many things in our book." Use the following strategies to share the book:

- Point to and label objects in the pictures. Example: "This is a comb. This is a brush. This is called a bowl full of mush. Mush is like cereal. Do you see the spoon?"
- Invite the infant to point to items that you name. Example: "The kittens are playing! Where are the kittens in this picture?"
- Spend more time on pictures that appear to be of particular interest to the infant.
- Example: "The bunny is in his bed. The bunny has a green blanket. It is nighttime. The bunny is going to go night night in his bed. Goodnight, bunny!"
- Acknowledge gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'night night!' Yes, it is time to go night night. Goodnight kittens! Goodnight mittens!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences. Example: "This is a picture of the room where bunny sleeps. We see a bed and books and toys. Do you have books and toys where you live?"
- Emphasize the word goodnight and encourage the infant to say the word, or part of the word, with you throughout the book. Example: "Please help me say goodnight to the moon! Goodnight!" Speak slowly.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book sharing. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Matthew. You pointed to the red balloon. You said 'night night' when you looked at the bunny in his bed. You said goodnight to the moon! We had fun reading this book together."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

The goodnight theme will be familiar and the high-contrast pictures will be appealing to most infants. Although it is not necessary or appropriate to teach colors to infants, it is fine to use color names in describing some of the bold images in the book. Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of special interest to the infant, as suggested in the activity plan. It is not necessary to look at and talk about each picture in this book. Older infants will likely enjoy saying goodnight (or part of the word) with you. Infants also may enjoy making some of the sounds associated with several of the items, such as a meow of a kitten.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Provide a soft toy or other object for a young infant to hold during the book sharing.

Enrichment ■ As a follow-up to the book sharing, invite the infant to say goodnight to some items or people in the room. The infant may wish to wave his/her hand while saying goodnight.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several books with a goodnight theme, such as *Goodnight Moon*

Provide the goodnight-themed books to explore during floor time. Look at the pictures with infants and invite them to help you say goodnight (or night night) to items shown in the pictures. Older infants may enjoy pretending to go "night night." Place a small blanket over an interested infant's legs and say goodnight. Example: "Tomas is going to sleep. Night night, Tomas!"

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown

Goodnight Moon is a favorite of children of all ages. Provide props or toys for infants and toddlers to hold during the activity. After the book sharing, invite older toddlers and preschool-age children to engage in play related to a goodnight theme. Describe what children do. Example: "Sasha is rocking her baby. I think Sasha's baby is going to sleep. Let's all say 'goodnight baby.'"

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BLOCK 12

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant engages in cause-and-effect play with a water mat.

Key Concepts
Look
Push
Pat
Move

Materials Needed
Fill n' Fun Water Mat

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Fill the mat with warm water. Place the mat where tummy time typically occurs.

BEGIN: [*This activity is for an infant who can lift his/her torso while on his/her tummy. Move the infant to his/her tummy to reach the mat.*]

ACT: [*Point to and describe the colored fish inside the mat. Show the infant what happens when the mat is pushed. Example: "Isabella, look at the fish in the water. Here is a fish. There is another fish by your hand. Let's push on the water mat and see what happens."*]

Did the fish move inside our mat?

[*Describe the infant's reactions. Example: "You are smiling. You saw the fish move when I went 'pat-pat' on our mat."*

Demonstrate and describe a patting motion. Example: "Pat-pat. I am patting the warm water in our mat."]

Do you want to pat our mat?

[*Encourage the infant to pat the mat. Describe the infant's action and what happens. Example: "You went 'pat-pat' on our water mat. The fish moved when you pushed the water mat."*

Invite the infant to pat the mat again. Describe the infant's action and emphasize what happens. Examples: "Look, Isabella! You made the fish move! Your hand went 'pat-pat' and the fish moved." "You pushed the mat and the fish moved. You are smiling and looking at the fish move inside the water mat."

Repeat and extend the infant's vocalizations. Example: "You said 'ko ko.' Yes, you are making the fish move in the water."

Continue to describe the infant's actions with the mat. Example: "Now you are pushing on the edge of the mat. The edge feels different than the rest of the mat."

Hold the infant on your lap if there is fussing or other signals the infant wants a change. Example: "I think your fussy sounds say you are all done playing on your tummy. I am putting you on my lap. You can still see the fish." Point to the water mat.]

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

Let's say "bye-bye, fish."

RECAP: [*Point to the mat and describe the infant's play. Example: "Isabella, you pushed on the mat to make the fish move. You watched the fish move when you patted the water mat. Your word for the moving fish was 'ko-ko'."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

The activity plan suggests you repeatedly describe, with slightly different phrasing, the infant's actions and what happens as a result of the infant's actions. This repetition is intended to support the infant's emerging awareness of cause and effect (cause: I pat the mat/water; effect: the fish moves).

Watch the infant's gaze carefully and adapt your focus to the infant's interest. Some infants may be more interested in the sensory feel of the water-filled mat and/or looking at what is inside the mat. An infant may maintain interest in the water mat for 15–60 seconds. It is not necessary to coax the infant back to the water mat if his/her attention shifts.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Place a folded blanket under an infant's chest and tummy to raise him/her slightly higher than the water mat. The blanket will serve to support the infant's torso and make it easier to use both hands. ■ If the infant appears uneasy on his/her tummy near the mat, help him/her to a supported sitting position that may be more comfortable. ■ Point to your eyes when you say "Look."

Enrichment ■ Hold the infant on your lap so he/she can put his/her toes on the mat. Patting the mat with a foot may feel interesting to the infant and potentially broaden the infant's understanding of how to make things move inside the mat. ■ Move the water mat to the floor in front of a nonbreakable mirror so the infant may watch actions with the mat.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant engages in cause-and-effect play with a ball and toy dump truck.

Key Concepts
In

Out

Materials Needed
Toy dump truck (see Be Prepared)

Small ball

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Communication/Language

Optional Reading
I am a Dump Truck by Josephine Page

I am a Garbage Truck by Ace Landers

Be Prepared: The toy truck needs a dump box that tips.

Sit on the floor with a mobile infant and invite him/her to play with a dump truck. Provide time for the infant to explore the toy truck, including its dump box and wheels. Then introduce the ball by putting it in the dump box of the truck. Describe your action. Emphasize the word "in." Encourage the infant to tip the dump box. Draw attention to how the ball rolled out of the truck when the dump box was tipped. Emphasize the word "out." Offer an enthusiastic description of how the infant caused the ball to roll out of the truck. Example: "Wow, Hilary! You tipped the back of the truck and the ball rolled out!"

Encourage the infant to repeat the cycle: put the ball in the truck, tip the back of the truck, and watch the ball roll out. Offer verbal guidance as appropriate. The infant may prefer that you do one of the actions, such as put the ball in the truck. Share delight with the infant each time the ball rolls out of the truck. Continue to emphasize that the ball rolls out of the truck when the infant tips back the truck bed. Some infants may be interested in pushing or pulling the truck to make it go.

What to Look For—Option 2

As suggested in the activity plan, the infant may like you to participate in the routine by doing one of the actions, most likely the task of putting the ball in the truck. Infants will enjoy tipping the dump box and watching the ball roll out. Some infants will want to do the activity over and over. This repetition is beneficial to the infant's awareness of cause and effect in the activity.

At this age, infants are not able to judge size. You may see an infant attempt to sit in or stand on the truck.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Demonstrate how to tip the truck bed if the infant seems uncertain about how the truck bed works. Describe your action and encourage the infant to tip the truck several times, with or without the ball in it. ■ Get a similar truck and ball to use when you demonstrate the actions. Your own set could also be used for parallel play with the infant.

Enrichment ■ Provide a second ball to put in the truck. ■ If the infant readily puts the ball in the truck and then tips the truck bed, add the action of moving the truck a short distance after the ball is put in the truck bed.

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BLOCK 12

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Interest Area

Materials Needed: baby gym with hanging toys, spinning top, vehicle toys, balls, tubes, blocks, push/ride toys

Arrange colorful toys hanging from a baby gym that nonmobile infants can hit or kick to make them move. Put out a spinning top, vehicle toys, and balls for early mobile infants to crawl to and explore. Arrange tubes and small balls, blocks to stack and push down, and toys to ride and push for mobile infants. Each of these materials supports an infant's emerging awareness of cause and effect.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: dot markers, paper, salt, cookie tray

As a complement to the two activity options for infants, provide toddlers and preschool-age children with items that support awareness of cause and effect actions. Dot markers in bright colors are simple tools. Each time a child presses the dot marker down, a bright dot appears on the paper. To provide a sensory experience related to cause and effect, make a salt tray for children to use for drawing and scribbles. Pour one cup of table salt into a cookie tray or large art tray. Encourage children to draw or write with one finger. Older children can practice making shapes or letters.

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BLOCK 12

Focusing and Remembering

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

A young infant participates in guided play that supports persistence in exploring a novel fish toy.

Key Concepts
Reach

Touch

Materials Needed
Melissa & Doug® Flip Fish Soft Baby Toy (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Use a toy fish with textured scales that provide tactile and visual stimulation when manipulated.

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her tummy. Sit close to the infant so he/she can see your face and hear your voice.*]

ACT: [*Animate the fish toy by "swimming" the fish slowly from side to side, about 12 inches from the infant.*]

Look at this fish! You can reach for the fish. You can play with the fish.

[*Describe the infant's initial actions. Example: "Christopher, you are holding your head up and reaching for the fish. This is a big job for you!"*

Carefully position the toy within reasonable reach of the infant. Do not immediately place the toy in the infant's hand(s). The intent is to provide a small challenge for the infant to reach the toy. If the infant shows signs of frustration in reaching the toy, offer reassurance with encouraging words and a pat on his/her back. If frustration in reaching the toy continues, move the fish toy closer to the infant so it is easier to reach.

Describe the infant's persistence and actions. Example: "You reached for the fish. You got it! Now you are playing with the fish."

Use your finger and thumb to make a sound with a scale. Then encourage the infant to feel the textured scales. Example: "Listen to the sound this makes. You can touch it, too!"

Respond to vocalizations and facial expressions. Example: "You are smiling at the fish. You are touching the fish. I think you like listening to sounds you can make with the fish!"

Stay focused with the infant for as long as he/she wishes to explore the toy. It is not necessary or appropriate to coax the infant to continue the activity.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you offer a brief summary of the infant's actions. Example: "You reached for the fish. You held the fish. You touched different parts of the fish. You had fun playing with the fish toy!"*]

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

What to Look For—Option 1

When you first show the fish toy to the infant, look carefully at his/her reactions to determine a reasonable distance between the toy and the infant's hand. Provide a small amount of challenge for the infant to reach for and grasp the toy. Too much distance may lead to inappropriate frustration or disinterest. Too little distance, such as immediately handing the toy to the infant, defeats the activity's goal of promoting the infant's persistence.

Also, watch and support the infant's exploration of a textured scale(s) or other toy features. In addition to the textured scales, the colorful toy has many features that may appeal to an infant. These include the ring, eyes, squeaky tail, small pictures hidden under the scales, and contrast of textured (on top) and plain (on bottom) surfaces. A young infant may show interest in one or several features, but probably not all features. Draw attention to the scales, as suggested in the activity plan, but do not attempt to point out all interesting aspects of the toy. If the infant tries to move a scale, give time for the infant to do this on his/her own. Offer assistance if the infant seems unclear about what to do. Your descriptions of the infant's actions with the toy promote persistence in exploring the fish.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Make sure your comments about the infant's actions are on-time descriptions of what you see. Example: "You are giving the fish a hug!" is said when the infant is actually hugging the toy.

Enrichment ■ If it appears the infant is losing interest in the toy after a brief time with it, draw attention to the bumpy, squeaky tail by pressing on the tail to create a sound. If this does not prompt further exploration, conclude the play period if the infant continues to show signs of wanting to do something else.

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BLOCK 12

Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An older infant participates in guided play that supports persistence in moving toward, grasping, and exploring a novel fish toy.

Key Concepts
Touch

Flip

Materials Needed
Melissa & Doug® Flip Fish Soft Baby Toy

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Use a toy fish with textured scales that provide tactile and visual stimulation when manipulated.

Sit or kneel several feet from a mobile infant. Softly call the infant's name, explain that you have a fish toy, and manipulate the fish in a swimming movement to draw the infant's attention. Invite the infant to move toward you to see (or get) the toy fish. Slowly "swim" the fish from side to side as the infant gets closer to you. Describe the infant's persistence and progress. Examples: "I see you are coming to get this pretty fish! You are working hard to get here." "You are almost here!"

When the infant is within close proximity, hold the fish a reasonable distance from the infant so there is a slight challenge for the infant in reaching for and grasping the toy. Offer verbal encouragement. Example: "Your hand is almost touching our pretty fish." After securing the toy, the infant may shift his/her position to sit on the floor or may want to sit on your lap.

Encourage the infant to hold and manipulate the fish. After a brief period of independent exploration of the toy, encourage the infant to touch the textured scales if he/she has not discovered these. Show how to flip a scale to see a hidden picture. Invite the infant to flip a scale. Offer an enthusiastic response to lifting a scale and draw attention to the small picture hidden under the scale. Offer another demonstration of how to flip a scale to see a hidden picture if it seems the infant is not clear on what to do.

Acknowledge the infant's discoveries of the toy's features. Example: "You are squeezing the tail! The tail is making a squeaking sound. You are laughing!" Respond to the infant's vocalizations and facial expressions.

Support the infant's exploration by talking and maintaining your focus on his/her play. Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You crawled to me and got the fish! You are smiling. You are touching parts of the fish."

Conclude the activity after several minutes or when the infant begins to lose interest. Acknowledge the infant's persistence. Example: "You scooted to me to get the fish toy! We found some neat parts of our toy. You liked the squeaking sound of the fish tail. You laughed a lot!"

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

What to Look For—Option 2

Look carefully at the infant's reactions to the toy at three key points: when you first show the toy, when the infant tries to reach the toy with his/her hand, and when you demonstrate how to flip a scale to see a hidden picture. Each of these points offers an opportunity to adjust your actions so the infant experiences an appropriate amount of challenge in pursuing his/her interests. As indicated in the Option 1 plan, too much challenge may lead to inappropriate frustration or disinterest. Too little challenge defeats the activity's goal of promoting the infant's persistence.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ An infant is more likely to persist when he/she is alert, comfortable, and not distracted by other things in the room. Be sure to offer the activity in an area where other toys and activities will not compete for the infant's attention.

Enrichment ■ Show and slightly manipulate two toys, the fish toy and one other toy, when you invite the infant to move toward you to see and play with a toy. Encourage the infant to pick one of the toys when he/she reaches you.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: jumbo ocean animal toys, tub with a thin layer of room temperature water

Place several ocean animals in the tub with a small amount of water. Invite two infants to play with the materials. Talk with the infants about their discoveries and what they are doing with the toys. Infants will likely explore the wet toys with their mouths. Remove the toys from the activity area when the infants are finished, rather than returning them to the tub. Replace the water and toys between each pair of infants.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: Melissa & Doug® Flip Fish Soft Baby Toy—1 per child

Invite several preschool-age children in your setting to play together with the fish toys involved in the activity plan. Provide one toy for each child. Encourage the children to flip the scales on his/her fish and figure out whether the toys have same or different hidden pictures.

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BLOCK 12

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver using fabric stacking rings.

Key Concepts
Look
Listen
Ring

Materials Needed
Lamaze® Rainbow Stacking Rings

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a comfortable reclining position. Begin the activity with two stacking rings only. Keep the remaining rings for possible use later in the activity. The peg is not used in this option except as an Enrichment possibility.*

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Hello, Grayson! You had your bottle and we changed your diaper. Would you like to play with me?" Acknowledge the infant's reactions. Example: "I can hear you cooing, Layla. You are talking to me. I think you are ready to play!"]

ACT: [*Hold the two rings about 12 inches from the infant.*]

Look, I have two rings for us to play with! The rings feel soft. Listen to the sound they make when you touch them! Maybe you would like to touch and hold the rings.

[*The infant may reach for one or both of the rings. If the infant looks but does not take a ring, gently squeeze a ring to make a crinkle sound. Describe your actions and draw attention to the sound. Also, you may wish to move the rings slowly from side to side to keep the infant's attention.*

Describe the infant's reactions to the rings. Examples: "You are kicking your feet! You are listening to the crinkling sound, Mia. I will hold it close so you can touch it." "You are holding both rings, Logan! Now you are waving the rings back and forth!"

Respond to vocalizations by repeating an utterance. Example: "Ba-ba-ma-ma. I hear you talking!" Acknowledge facial expressions.

If the infant remains interested in the rings, introduce one more ring.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of the interaction. Example: "Thank you for playing with me, Carter. You held both of the rings! You smiled at me and I smiled at you! We had fun together!"*]

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BLOCK 12

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant participates in a back-and-forth interaction with a caregiver while playing with stacking rings.

Key Concepts
Look

Rings

Materials Needed
Stacking rings

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity uses the two largest rings and the base. The remaining rings can be placed aside.

Invite an infant to sit with you on the floor to play with stacking rings. Place the toy between you, with the two rings on the base. While the infant is watching, remove both rings. You may wish to invite the infant to help you remove the rings.

Place the rings in front of the infant near the stand. Provide time for the infant to explore the items as he/she wishes. Describe the infant's actions.

If it appears the infant would like some guidance on using the toys, point to and describe the toy. Example: "Look, we have two rings. We can put the rings on this base." Demonstrate by holding one ring over the peg on the base. Invite the infant to try placing the ring on the peg. The infant may imitate your actions, explore the items in his/her own way, or disengage from the activity. Acknowledge the infant's exploration of the toy, whether or not he/she tries to place the rings over the peg.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

The activity options continue the practice of using a toy to facilitate social exchanges between you and an infant. Both options involve your following the child's lead with the toys and serving in a support role. In each option, the plan suggests you offer possible actions with the toys (making a crinkling noise in Option 1, stacking the rings in Option 2) but whether these ideas are pursued is the infant's decision. Focus on positive interactions between you and the infant and not on particular uses of the toys.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Use the largest and the smallest rings in Option 1 to provide contrast in the two toys. ■ If an infant shows interest in stacking the rings on the peg in Option 2, offer assistance only if the infant seems frustrated or uncertain about what to do. Affirm the infant's efforts to stack the rings. Example: "You stacked the rings on the peg! You made the rings work!"

Enrichment ■ If an infant shows strong enjoyment of ring exploration in Option 1, make all of the rings available, organized on the peg. The infant is likely to enjoy removing the rings from the peg. Use of the peg is to organize the rings. A young infant is not expected to put rings on the peg. ■ If an infant in Option 2 stacks the two rings, suggest the infant repeat the activity. You may wish to offer a third ring.

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BLOCK 12

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Interest Area

Materials Needed: two or more ring stacking toys, basket to hold the assortment of rings

Be Prepared: Remove the rings from the bases and place the assorted rings in a basket. Place the pegged bases nearby.

Encourage infants to explore the toys in their own ways. Some infants will enjoy removing the rings from the basket, and may enjoy returning the rings to the basket. Older infants may work to place the rings on a pegged base. Watch for opportunities to comment on infants' actions and provide assistance when appropriate.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: ring toss toys, several stacking ring toys

Supplement the activity options for infants with opportunities for toddlers and preschool-age children to explore characteristics of stacking rings, such as shape, texture, color, and size. Explain how rings can fit over a peg because of the hole in the middle. Talk with children about their interests with the toys.

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BLOCK 12

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

A young infant participates in hand and arm movements at and across the midline guided by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Move

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language

Place the infant on his/her back on the floor. Engage the infant in the activity only when he/she is alert and seems ready for some action. Use a playful and gentle approach to moving the infant's hands to a rhyme or song of your choice. Use your voice, not a recording. Slowly move the infant's hands/arms at or across the midline as follows: (1) hands up and down the midline at the same time; (2) hands from side to side across the midline at the same time; and (3) clapping hands at the midline, near the center of the infant's chest. Maintain eye contact and a big smile throughout the activity. Talk with the infant about how we are moving our hands. Stop if the infant protests or pulls his/her hands away. Conclude the activity with enthusiastic comments. Describe the infant's participation. The activity should last about one minute.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An older infant participates in guided play that encourages bringing both hands, or crossing both hands, at the midline.

Key Concepts
Tap

Materials Needed
Small toys—2 per infant and caregiver (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Be Prepared: Select two different small toys that are related in type. The toys should be no bigger than the infant's palm. The activity description below uses animal toys, such as those shown in the picture.

Sit on the floor facing an infant who can sit independently or with support. Be sure an infant feels secure before you begin the play with toys.

Present one toy for the infant to grasp and hold with one or both hands. Support interest in the toy by acknowledging the infant's reaction. Example: "Mateo, I see a big smile. You like this little turtle toy!" Offer the second toy. Encourage the infant to hold one toy in each hand. Most infants will be interested in exploring the toys by mouthing them.

Hold two toys, one in each hand at your midline at about the center of your chest. Show your toys to the infant. Tap your two toys together in a playful manner at your midline. Describe what you are doing. Example: "My animals go tap, tap, tap." Invite the infant to tap his/her animals together. Example: "Would you like to tap your animals?" Demonstrate tapping the animals together. Enthusiastically acknowledge any infant effort to move his/her toys to the midline.

Below are two additional ways to encourage the infant to bring his/her hands (toys) to the midline:

- Pretend your toys are dancing while you hold them at your midline and move them around, especially crossing the midline. Invite the infant to have his/her toys dance.
- Pretend your two toys are talking with one another while you hold them at your midline and move them slightly. Example: "Turtle says hi to Hedgehog! Hedgehog says hi to Turtle. Hi. Hi. Turtle and Hedgehog say hi to your toys!" Invite the infant to have his/her toys say hi to each other.

Describe the infant's actions with his/her toys, especially efforts to bring the toys to the midline.

If a toy drops, wait for the infant to reach for the toy. Explain: "The turtle fell down. You can get it." Some infants may look at you or vocalize. Ask "Would you like help?"

If an infant attempts to put a toy to your mouth, simply reply in a cheerful manner. "No thanks. Let's make the animals dance."

The activity may last for a few minutes or maybe less.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

Older infants participate in a game of reaching across the midline to catch floating toys in a water tub.

Key Concepts
Reach

Catch

Materials Needed
Water smocks—1 per infant

Floating toys

Container (see Be Prepared)

Sensory tub (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Cognitive

Be Prepared: Prepare a sensory tub with a few inches of warm water. Place small toys that float, such as shapes, into a container. The toys should be small enough for infants to hold.

Invite 2–3 infants who can readily stand to play a game of catching toys that are floating in a tub. Drop a toy from the container into the tub to demonstrate how to catch it. The toy will move slightly after being dropped into the water. Use one hand/arm to reach for the toy and use your other hand to nudge the floating toy to your "reaching" hand. Then grasp the toy with both hands. If you anticipate this two-step approach to using both hands will be too challenging, demonstrate using both of your hands to catch a floating toy.

Drop a set of toys from the container into the water, let the toys float briefly, and then encourage the infants to reach for and catch a toy. Describe each infant's actions. Example: "Robert caught a star! He used both hands." Invite infants to place their "caught" toy in the container that you manage. Drop the toys back into the water for a repeat of the activity.

Avoid competition. You may wish to drop into the water only as many toys as there are infants at the tub and invite infants to catch one toy per drop.

Encourage infants to use both hands. After the initial drop of toys, encourage infants to catch a toy that involves movement of their hands across the midline. You may wish to drop the toys in areas of the tub that promote moving across the midline.

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of the three activity options offers age-appropriate support for moving hands at or across the midline. Joining hands together (typically 3–4 months of age) and reaching across the midline (6+ months) involve coordination of both sides of the body. These actions are related to important aspects of brain development, as described in the *ELM Curriculum User Guide* for infants and toddlers, and continue to be refined over the first 3–4 years of life.

In Option 1, it is important to use your (vs. a recorded) voice so you can vary the tempo and volume in response to the infant's responses. This brief activity could be done at the beginning of another activity with a young infant.

In Option 2, anticipate that an infant may not imitate your actions and will want to use the toys in his/her way. Positively acknowledge the infant's uses of the toys. After a short period of exploring the toys as the infant wishes, consider placing the infant without the toys on your lap for an adaptation

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

of Option 1. In Option 2, an infant who is teething may be mostly interested in chewing the toy. Offer a teething toy. If a teething toy does not help the infant focus on the toys, offer guided play with the toys at a later time.

The floating toys in Option 3 add a little challenge visually to the task of reaching for a toy. Use a lower, slower drop if the amount of floating is a concern for infants.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ In Option 2, offer two different toys if the infant seems uninterested in what you offer initially. ■ In Option 3, kneel next to an infant who needs reassurance or extra support. Increase the number of toys so the task of catching one is more achievable.

Enrichment ■ In Option 2, place one or both of the toys on the floor in front of the infant so he/she has the experience of reaching for a toy(s). ■ In Option 2, use a different combination of toys for tapping if this action is of continuing interest to an infant. ■ In Option 3, vary the size of the floating toys.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: sound makers (such as ball with beads inside), water mat

For nonmobile infants, arrange on the floor play materials that will make a sound when moved, such as a ball with beads inside. Hold sound makers for nonmobile infants to kick or swipe.

For early mobile infants, place the water mat (used in Cognitive Option 1 in this block) on the floor and encourage infants to push on the mat with both hands at the same time. The result will be visible movements of the toys inside the mat.

Sit on the floor to observe mobile infants at play. Watch for and comment on hand actions that bring hands and/or feet to the midline. Example: If an infant begins to move his/her feet together and apart, encourage him/her to try it again.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: blue painter's tape, paper stars, board book *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* by Caroline Jayne Church

Provide additional materials to encourage infants to cross the midline with their hands. One possibility is to make small loops of blue painter's tape and attach a small paper star to each one. Tape the stars in your home's play area at heights infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children can reach. Encourage children to reach for a star with one hand and then with the opposite hand. For a related experience, hang a few small stars over the diaper table. Hold an infant so he/she can swipe at the stars with one hand and the other.

Another possibility is to share the *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* board book with children and then encourage them to pretend to catch stars. Emphasize reaching across the midline to catch pretend stars. You may wish to sing the first verse of "Catch a Falling Star" (see an online source for the lyrics, tune, and motions).

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BLOCK 13 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that includes looking at pictures of familiar objects and feeling textures included in the book.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing that includes page turning, feeling textures included in pictures, and talking about familiar objects.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing that includes helping manage the book, feeling textures included in pictures, and talking about familiar objects.

Cognitive

Solving Problems

Option 1 (OO) A young infant is encouraged to reach for and grasp a toy that can be partially hidden in a caregiver's hand.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant is encouraged to creep or crawl around a barrier to obtain a toy.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant is encouraged to find a toy hidden behind a caregiver's back and then behind an existing barrier.

Self-Regulation

Paying Attention

Option 1 (OO) An infant practices focusing on a toy manipulated by a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices focusing on a toy manipulated by the infant and a caregiver.

Social-Emotional

Interacting With Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver during a care routine.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant contributes to a familiar care routine with a caregiver.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant contributes to a transition to outdoor time with a caregiver.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) An infant is encouraged to crawl as part of open-ended play with several small toys.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant explores crawling over a low foam shape.

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

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BLOCK 13

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that includes looking at pictures of familiar objects and feeling textures included in the book.

Key Concepts
Book
Look

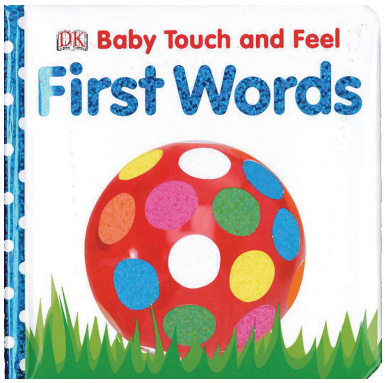
Materials Needed
Baby Touch and Feel: First Words by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

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

ACT: I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the ball?



[*Pause and acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the ball, Zain. You are waving your arms and kicking your legs!"*]

Our book has pictures of things we see every day. Let's open the book and see what we find!

[*Open the book to the first page. Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:*

- *Point to and describe pictures. Comment on what the infant seems to be looking at. Example: "You are looking at the car. The car has shiny wheels, see? Vroom, vroom!"*
- *Invite infant to feel textures on pertinent pages. Example: "You are looking at the doggy. The doggy has soft, curly fur. Would you like to touch the doggy's fur? I will hold the picture close so you can touch it!"*
- *Spend more time talking about pictures of particular interest to the infant.*
- *Describe and respond to the infant's gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are cooing at the picture of the ball, Jackson! You like to play with the ball in our room."*
- *Use your voice to add interest. Turn to the next page with enthusiasm.*]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book together! Our book had pictures of some things we see every day. You cooed at the picture of the red ball! We touched the doggy's soft fur. You smiled and kicked your legs when you looked at the toy car. We had fun with our book!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

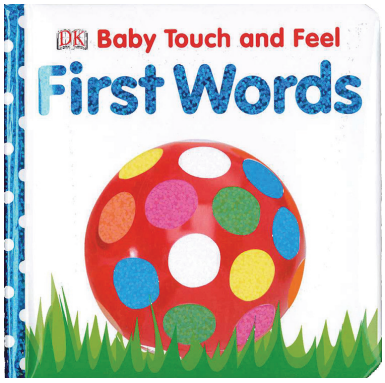
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing that includes page turning, feeling textures included in pictures, and talking about familiar objects.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Touch

Materials Needed
Baby Touch and Feel: First Words by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "See the picture of the red ball? We have a red ball in our room. Our book has pictures of different things we see every day. We can touch and feel some of the pictures! Let's read our book!" Use the following strategies to look at, touch, and talk about pictures in the book:



- Invite the infant to help you turn the pages of the book. Follow the infant's preferences for the pace of looking at pictures.
- Point to and name pictured objects. Encourage the infant to feel available textures embedded in the pictures. Example: "Look at the red strawberry! You can touch the shiny seeds on the strawberry! Do you feel them?"
- Draw attention to how different textures feel. Example: "This is a baby doll. The baby doll is wearing a dress. Here, you can touch the doll's soft dress! How does it feel?"
- Spend more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Offer additional information about pictured characteristics of the item. Examples: "You are looking at the teddy bear. The teddy bear is wearing a striped sweater! Look, he has two fuzzy ears. Would you like to touch the teddy bear's ears?" "There are spots on the ball. I am pointing to the spots."
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations.
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences. Examples: "Here is a bowl and spoon. This spoon looks like the spoon you use! You used a spoon this morning to eat your cereal." "You are smiling and cooing at the cat. You have a cat that lives at your house! You can feel the cat's whiskers!"
- Recognize infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Avery. You touched the doggy's soft fur. You pointed to the ball with shiny dots. You smiled and kicked your legs when we looked at the toy car! I think you liked this book."

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BLOCK 13

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

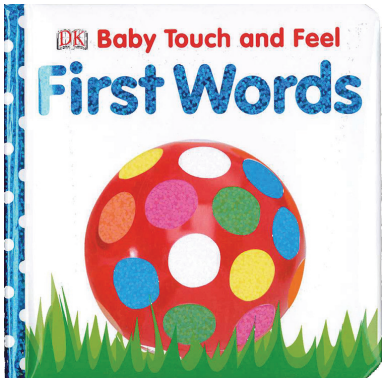
Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates in a book sharing that includes helping manage the book, feeling textures included in pictures, and talking about familiar objects.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Touch

Materials Needed
Baby Touch and Feel: First Words by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to help you hold the book and turn the pages. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look at the picture of the red ball. The ball has shiny spots! Our book has pictures of different things that you may know! We can touch some of the pictures. Let's read our book!" Use the following strategies to share the book:

- Point to and describe objects in the pictures. Encourage the infant to feel available textures embedded in the pictures. Example: "This is a dog. Look, the dog is playing with a toy ball! Here are the dog's ears. Here is the dog's tail. Would you like to touch the dog's soft, curly fur? How does the fur feel?"
- Invite the infant to point to and/or touch objects that you name. Example: "The teddy bear has ears. Where are the teddy bear's ears? The ears are soft. You can touch the ears!"
- Spend more time talking about pictures that appear to be of particular interest to the infant. Offer more information about pictured characteristics of the item. Example: "You are pointing to the toy car. The car has shiny wheels! I think this car can go fast. Vroom, vroom!"
- Describe and respond to the infant's gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'meow.' The kitty cat says 'meow.' 'Meow, meow' kitty cat!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences. Example: "Look at the two socks. The socks are soft. You can feel them! You have socks too! Your socks are on your feet. Do your socks feel soft? Let's touch your socks to find out if they feel soft."
- Recognize infant's participation in the book sharing. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Mason. We looked at all the pictures. You pointed to the shiny dots on the ball. You touched the teddy bear's soft ears. We had fun reading this book together."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Many infants will be interested in the pictures of familiar toys plus items from their daily routines, such as socks, bib, and bowl/spoon. The simple and uncluttered images on a solid background help an infant focus on objects shown in a picture. This book invites participation with the opportunity to touch and feel different textures included in the pictures. You may wish to return to a picture(s) of special interest to the infant at the conclusion of the book sharing or at a later point during the day.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ If time or infant interest is short, you may wish to skip some pictures in the book. Spending time on a smaller set of pictures is more helpful to an infant than attempting to look at and talk about each picture in a short time period.

Enrichment ■ Invite an older infant to help you find some of the book's pictured items in your room. Encourage the infant to point to the real item, and then to the corresponding picture in the book. ■ Invite two older infants to share the book together with you. Help the infants alternate touching and feeling a picture. Example: "Ava is touching the doggy's fur. Now Muhammad is touching the doggy! You both touched the doggy's fur. Let's turn the page and see what's next!"

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Baby Touch and Feel: First Words* by DK Publishing, several items from the book (such as a sock, toy car, bowl/spoon, ball, baby doll, or teddy bear), basket to place the items in

Provide real versions of pictured items in the book. Help infants feel a texture provided in the book and a real item from your room. Describe how things feel and talk with infants about the things they are touching and feeling.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Baby Touch and Feel: First Words* by DK Publishing, several items from the book, (such as a sock, toy car, bowl/spoon, ball, baby doll, and teddy bear), basket to place the items in

Invite older children in your care to play a matching game with the items from the book. Place the basket of items in front of you. As you share the book, invite one child at a time to find an item in the basket that matches the item pictured in the book. Older children may help younger toddlers find the corresponding item in the basket. Infants may enjoy holding an item from the book during the activity.

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BLOCK 13

Solving Problems

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

A young infant is encouraged to reach for and grasp a toy that can be partially hidden in a caregiver's hand.

Key Concepts
See
Reach
Hold

Materials Needed
Small toy duck

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

Optional Reading
Cuddle for Little Duck by Claire Freedman

BEGIN: [*Invite a young infant to sit securely on your lap. Hold the small duck toy about 12 inches from his/her chest. Move the toy duck slightly and add a little quacking sound for fun.*]

ASK: Would you like to get the little duck? I will hold it a little closer so you can get ahold of it.

[*Place the toy on your palm within the infant's reach. Encourage the infant to get the little duck.*]

ACT: [*Position the toy to allow the infant to get a good hold on it. Encourage the infant's efforts in coordinating his/her hands and eyes to get the toy duck. Example: "You can see the little duck. Now you are reaching for the toy."*

Hold out your hand and encourage the infant to give you the toy. If the infant places the toy in your hand (or drops it so you can have it), partially cover the toy in the palm of your hand. Leave part of the toy visible to the infant. Use facial expressions and your voice to ask where the toy went. Open your hand to show the toy if the infant does not reach for the hand partially hiding the toy.

If the infant does not want to return the toy to you, describe the infant's actions with the toy.]

RECAP: [*Even though a young infant does not understand most specific words, offer a short description of what took place. Example: "Jayden, you got ahold of the little duck. Then you found the little duck hiding in my hand!"*]

What to Look For—Option 1

Getting ahold of a toy represents an important cognitive and motor achievement for an infant. The activity supports the infant's emerging skills in visually tracking an item. There also is an opportunity to practice remembering where an item is located (partially hidden in the palm of your hand). Look carefully at the infant's reaching and grasping skills, which are central to the activity, and provide assistance as needed. Moving the toy closer for the infant to reach is an important way to be supportive without

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

eliminating the challenges of reaching and grasping. Avoid putting the toy in the infant's hands unless necessary, as described in an Extra Support tip. Generally, an infant will move the toy directly to his/her mouth for exploration. You may wish to offer a teething toy.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If the infant has not begun to reach and grasp, encourage him/her to look at the duck toy and watch it move from side to side. Adapt the activity to focus on visual attention to a slightly moving object. You also may wish to place the toy in the infant's hand for further exploration. ■ In the opening segment of the activity, touch the infant's hand with the toy to support interest in reaching for and grasping the item.

Enrichment ■ Offer a second duck toy of a different size and shape.

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BLOCK 13

Solving Problems *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

An older infant is encouraged to creep or crawl around a barrier to obtain a toy.

Key Concepts
Around

Materials Needed
1 duck puppet
1 rubber or plastic duck
Low barrier (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

Optional Reading
Cuddle for Little Duck by Claire Freedman

Be Prepared: Identify an existing low barrier to separate you from an infant for a few moments. A low toy storage unit or shelf may be a possibility. Keep the two toys with you.

Invite an infant who has mastered crawling to play a game with you. Position yourself on one side of the barrier, opposite the infant. Sit so the infant can see you clearly. Place the duck puppet on your hand to animate it. Use the puppet to say the infant's name and ask him/her to come around the barrier. Infants may enjoy seeing the duck puppet sing and move.

Encourage infant's efforts to creep or crawl around the barrier. Example: "You're getting here. You are working hard to get here." Recognize the infant's awareness of how to get around the barrier. Example: "Ayanna, you figured out how to get the duck! You crawled around the shelf."

Lay the puppet and rubber duck on the floor and invite the infant to select one to play with. Use simple phrases and explain there is one duck toy and one duck puppet. Point to each. Describe the infant's reaction to the toys. Do not immediately put a toy in the infant's hands. Wait for the infant to grasp or go near one of the toys. Encourage the infant to explore the toys.

What to Look For—Option 2

Determine the best distance between you and the infant to create an achievable creeping or crawling challenge. You may see an infant attempt to reach you and the toys by moving toward the center of the barrier. If an infant crawls up to the barrier, encourage him/her to crawl or creep around the end of the barrier. Show the infant a route around the barrier by pointing.

An infant may want to sit on your lap or very close to you upon reaching you. Welcome the infant and describe his/her actions. Example: "I think you want to sit on my lap. We can look at the toys together." The puppet is likely to intrigue the infant but also may be intimidating to hold or play with. This is the main reason for offering a second toy.

The activity may be used with 2–3 creeping or crawling infants. Adjust the number of play materials so each infant has one to explore after reaching the destination. Provide individualized comments about each infant's efforts.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Move next to an infant who needs support for understanding how to get around the barrier. You may wish to crawl next to the infant and restate the direction for getting around to where the toys are located. Example: "We can see the ducks if we go this way." ■ Use another type of puppet if a duck puppet is not available. It is helpful to the infant's toy decision-making for the two toys to represent the same type of animal.

Enrichment ■ Engage the infant in an interaction using the toys. Example: "You are holding the puppet. I am holding the rubber duck." Pause for the infant to respond. ■ Draw attention to details of the toys, such as the eye and the beak. ■ Encourage the infant to feel each of the toys; one is soft and the other is smooth.

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BLOCK 13

Solving Problems *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

An older infant is encouraged to find a toy hidden behind a caregiver's back and then behind an existing barrier.

Key Concepts
Duck
Find
Around

Materials Needed
Duck puppet
Rubber or plastic duck
Low barrier (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

Optional Reading
Five Little Ducks by Annie Kubler

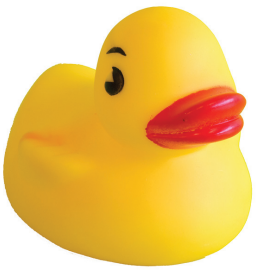
Be Prepared: Identify an existing low barrier to use for briefly hiding the puppet. A low toy storage unit or shelf may be a possibility.

Invite a mobile infant to play with you and a puppet. Sit on the floor facing the infant and show him/her the puppet. Show how the puppet fits on your hand. Move the puppet and use it to speak if the child seems comfortable. Example: "Hi, Robert. Quack quack. Would you like to touch my fuzzy head?" Pause for the infant to react.

Play with the infant and puppet for a few moments. The infant may or may not want to touch the puppet. Then put the puppet behind your back and repeat the quacking sound. Ask the infant "Where is our duck?" Act happily surprised when the infant finds the duck behind your back!

Next tell the infant that the duck is going to hide. Get up and move behind an existing barrier. Maintain communication with the infant so he/she can visually track your movement. Sit down and hold the duck puppet so the infant can see that you have it. Quickly lower the duck puppet so it cannot be seen from the opposite side of the barrier.

Wait and observe the infant's reactions. If the infant comes toward the barrier, make a quacking sound again as encouragement to continue searching. Tell the infant "You hear the duck." If the infant does not begin looking for the duck puppet, give verbal encouragement. Keep the duck low so the infant can only see it if he/she goes around the barrier.



Enthusiastically recognize the infant's accomplishment in figuring out how to get around the barrier to find the puppet. Example: "Robert, you really wanted to find the duck puppet. You figured out how to go around the shelf."

Offer the puppet to the infant as soon as he travels around the barrier. If the infant does not want to play with the puppet, offer the other duck toy.

What to Look For—Option 3

An infant who can walk may opt to crawl around the barrier. Many infants use both crawling and walking after they walk independently. Crawling may provide more security than walking and greater confidence in regulating the pace and direction of movement around a barrier. The current option provides

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

more challenge than Option 2 by including two consecutive instances of hiding the puppet and a more focused opportunity to play with the puppet. Be especially attentive to the infant's reactions to the puppet and make adjustments accordingly, as suggested in the activity description and scaffolding tips.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If an infant is uncomfortable with the talking puppet, take time at the beginning of the activity to show the puppet to the infant when it is off your hand. Consider using another small, soft toy with a face. ■ If the infant wants the puppet on his/her hand, give as much assistance as needed.

Enrichment ■ Put one rubber duck behind the infant and pretend you do not know where it is. Ask the infant "Where is the duck?" The child will be pleased to produce it for you!

Interest Area

Materials needed: books, small toys, muffin pan, cups, rubber ducks, infant-sized shopping carts

Open books with bright illustrations and stand them where infants can see them. Provide toys that are soft, firm, and fuzzy for non-mobile infants to feel and explore.

Place a small toy in a transparent cup for an infant to discover. Put small toys into a muffin pan. Older infants may enjoy removing the toys and putting them back into the muffin pan.

Place small toys on low surfaces with cups or containers covering them to encourage looking for hidden items. For infants who have mastered walking, place duck toys in infant-sized shopping carts for infants to transport to other parts of the room. If possible, provide big and little rubber ducks for infants to hold.

Family Child Care

Materials needed: peek-a-boo books, toy, container, craft materials

Supplement the activity options with peek-a-boo books that you can share with infants and toddlers. Toddlers and preschool-age children enjoy finding games that involve going around a barrier. Add challenge by placing the desired toy in a container the children must open. Consider having the children make "treasures" using craft materials and hide them indoors or outside behind a barrier. For school-age children, consider making a map of the yard or indoor play space. Add letters of children's first names to the hidden treasure. Sam looks only for treasure marked with S, Anya looks for treasure marked with letter A, etc.

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BLOCK 13

Paying Attention

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

An infant practices focusing on a toy manipulated by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch

Touch

Materials Needed
Toy car

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

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

Hold the toy car about 12 inches from the infant and begin moving it slightly from side to side.]

ACT: Do you see the car?

[*Pause and acknowledge the infant's response. Describe any visual attention the infant gives to the toy. Example: "I see you are watching the car, Tiana. The car is moving back and forth."*

Move the car a little farther to one side and back toward the infant's middle. Describe the infant's response. Example: "You are moving your eyes. You are watching the car move."

Slowly move the car toward the infant's middle. Describe your actions. Example: "I am moving the car so you can touch it." Encourage the infant to touch or grasp the car. If the infant is not able to grasp the item, hold it near the infant's hands so he/she can touch and feel it.

Describe the infant's actions with the car. Examples: "You are reaching out and touching the car." "You are holding the car, Simran. You are touching the car's wheels."

Respond to any infant vocalizations. Example: "You are looking at the blue car and cooing. I think you want to play with the car!"

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest, such as looking elsewhere.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you describe what happened. Example: "We played with a blue car today. You watched the car go back and forth. You touched the car and moved it back and forth too!"*]

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BLOCK 13

Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

An older infant practices focusing on a toy manipulated by the infant and a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch

Hold

Materials Needed
Toy car

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite a mobile infant to sit with you on the floor to play with a toy. Sit facing the infant with a smile and introduce the toy car. Hold the car in front of the infant and pretend to make the car drive back and forth. Encourage the infant to watch the car drive around for a few moments. Example: "I can see you are watching the car drive. You are smiling and moving your eyes to watch the car."

Invite the infant to touch and hold the car. If the infant is unable to reach and grasp it, hold the car near his/her hands. Example: "Now it is your turn to play with our car. Would you like to hold it?" Encourage the infant to engage with the car and talk about his/her actions. Examples: "You are holding the car. You are driving it back and forth. What are you going to do next?" Acknowledge the infant's responses to the activity. Example: "You are smiling and driving the car on your legs! You are having fun with the car."

Transition out of the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest with the toy car. Acknowledge the infant's focus on the car during the activity. Example: "You watched the car drive back and forth. You touched the car's wheels. You made the car drive on the ground! We put the car away when you were done."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

The activity options support a young infant in concentrating on an object visually and through touch or manipulation. Most infants will be familiar with toy cars and will enjoy watching you move the car. Follow the lead of the infant throughout the activity to determine how much to move the car or how long to sustain the activity. Some infants may enjoy watching you drive the car, whereas others may be eager to touch and hold the car. Infants may focus on the car for several minutes or begin to lose interest much sooner.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Repeat a slow, simple movement of the toy several times if it appears the infant needs extra support to focus on the moving car. Describe your actions. Offer car noises, such as vroom, that may sustain the infant's concentration.

Enrichment ■ With an older infant, offer two similar cars during the activity, one for the infant and one for you. Invite the infant to repeat your actions of "driving" the car back and forth. ■ Recite a simple song or rhyme as the infant engages with the toy car. For example, sing the words "drive, drive, drive, your car" to the tune of "Row, Row, Row, Your Boat."

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Paying Attention *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several toy vehicles

Provide several toy vehicles for infants to play with during floor time. Select a vehicle to engage one or several nearby infants. Use some of the strategies suggested in the activity options to help infants to focus on the vehicle as you drive it around them. Some infants may enjoy you lightly driving the car or truck over their legs or arms. (Watch closely for each infant's reaction to this. If any discomfort is expressed, return to driving the vehicle in the air or on the floor.) Describe your actions with the vehicle to encourage the infants to follow your movements. Give each infant a vehicle to touch and hold. Talk with the infants about their actions and responses as they explore the vehicles.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several large toy cars, large ramp (may be made with a stiff piece of cardboard, large plastic tray, or other smooth surface propped at an angle)

Create a ramp for older toddlers and preschool-age children in your care to roll the cars down. Invite children to take turns placing a car at the top of the ramp to roll to the bottom. Encourage infants and younger toddlers to watch the cars as they roll down the ramp. Point to and describe the actions of the cars to encourage infants to follow the movements. Infants and young toddlers may enjoy holding a car during the activity.

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BLOCK 13

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills
A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver during a care routine.

Key Concepts
Diaper

Materials Needed
Diaper changing table and supplies

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is to be carried out during the familiar routine of diaper changing.

BEGIN: [*When a diaper change is needed, tell the infant what is going to happen. Example: "It is time to change your diaper, Sebastian. I am going to get your diaper while you finish looking at your rattle. Then I will come to pick you up."*

Use the following strategies to engage the infant during the diaper change:

- *Describe your actions. Example: "I have your diaper, Luna. I am going to pick you up now."*
- *Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You are lifting your arms, Sebastian. You are ready for me to pick you up!"*
- *Describe what is happening. Examples: "Here we go. Up, up, up!"*
- *Make up and offer during the routine a simple song that includes the infant's name. Examples: "Clean diaper, clean diaper, Tyler has a clean diaper!" "Wash, wash, wash our hands. Luna washes her hands!"*

- *Acknowledge the infant's likes and dislikes during the routine. Example: "I know you don't like the cold wet wipes, Sebastian. I will clean you quickly! Then we will wash our hands. You like to wash your hands, Sebastian!"*

Offer brief pauses in your comments during the routine so the infant has a chance to respond. Acknowledge vocalizations and/or facial expressions.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of the interaction. Example: "We changed your diaper, Luna. First I picked you up. Then I cleaned you and put a new diaper on you. After you were dressed, we washed our hands! You liked washing your hands, Luna."*]

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BLOCK 13

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant contributes to a familiar care routine with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Diaper

Book

Materials Needed
Diaper changing table and supplies

Assortment of books

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite an infant to participate in the familiar routine of a diaper change. Use the following strategies to encourage the infant to take part in the routine:

- Describe what is going to happen. Example: "It is time for a diaper change, Paisley! Would you like to help me find a clean diaper for you? Then we can go together to the diaper changing table."
- Invite the infant to hold and carry his/her diaper to the table. This may mean the infant helps hold the diaper while you carry the infant. Example: "I have your diaper, Matthew. Would you like to hold it? You can help carry it to our changing table."
- Describe what is happening and encourage back-and-forth interactions with the infant. Examples: "First we take your pants off! Look, you are wearing blue pants today, Isaiah. You have blue pants just like your blue shirt, see?" "All clean! You are ready for the clean diaper. Would you please give me your clean diaper? Then we will put your pants back on."
- Engage the infant in a short song or game, such as *Peekaboo*. Example: "What song would you like to sing today, Alexa? You like the 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star' song. Would you like to sing it with me?"
- Tell the infant what is going to happen next. Example: "You are all clean! We are going to wash our hands next. Do you remember what we do after that? It will be story time!"

- Provide the opportunity for the infant to take part in the transition to the next activity. Example: "It is story time next! Let's look at our books. Which book would you like to read first for our story time?"

Remember to pause and allow time for the infant to respond to your words and to the activity itself.

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BLOCK 13

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant contributes to a transition to outdoor time with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Play outside

Materials Needed
Infant's outdoor accessories (sunscreen, jacket, hat, etc.)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite an infant to participate in getting ready to play outside. Example: "We are finished reading books. Now it is time to play outside! Isaac, what do we need to do before we go outside?" Encourage the infant to begin the transition by helping to get his/her coat (or other item needed before going out). Example: "Let's go find your coat, Isabelle! Let's look. Do you see it?" Use the following strategies to support the infant's participation in getting ready to go outside:

- Invite the infant to participate in putting on outdoor clothing. Examples: "Here is your coat, Isabelle. I will help you put it on. Can you hold your arms out? Here you go!" "Look in your basket, Isaac. Do you see your red hat? There it is! Let's put your hat on your head."
- Provide choices throughout the transition. Example: "Would you like to put on your jacket or your hat first? I see you are looking at your hat. Let's put your hat on!"
- Describe steps of the transition. Example: "Isabelle has her coat on. Isaac has his coat on. We are getting ready to play outside! Let's sing a song while we wait for everyone to be ready!"
- Invite the infant to help sing a song while he/she waits for others in the room to be ready. Example: "What song should we sing while we wait? How about your favorite—'Old MacDonald Had a Farm'? Which animal would you like to sing about first?"

Acknowledge the infant's participation during the transition to outdoor play. Example: "First you found your coat. We put your coat on. Then you put on your hat! You wanted to sing about a cow while we waited for everyone to be ready. Now we get to play outside!"

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of these options encourages responsive interactions with infants during familiar routines. Infants are more likely to experience positive routines and transitions when they are engaged and an active participant in the process. Infants may react to routines and transitions in different ways. Watch for the infant to express interest in participating during a routine, such as pointing to the diapers, or bringing a hat to you for assistance in putting it on. Whenever possible, follow the infant's pace during the routine. Example: Some infants may want to spend one-to-one time with you singing or playing simple games during diaper changes, whereas others may prefer a quick change to return to a favorite activity.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Provide extra time during routines for infants who tend to exhibit challenging behaviors during transitions. Take time to describe what is happening and what will happen next. Acknowledge the infant's feelings regarding the transition. ■ Pay close attention to the infant's reactions during the activities. Remember to pause frequently for the infant to respond to the activity.

Enrichment ■ Make up a simple song using the infant's name that can be repeated during familiar routines. (See example in Option 1.) Sing this song each time you engage in that routine. ■ Invite infants to make as many choices as possible during routines. Example: You may ask the infant if he/she would like to carry the diaper to the table or if the infant would like you to carry it. Provide two options in which the infant can communicate his/her choice by looking, reaching, or pointing.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: photos of infants engaged in various activities and routines throughout the day; lamination or contact paper to protect the photos

Create a picture schedule of the day for infants to look at. Post the photos low on a wall, in order from left to right. Encourage infants to look at the photos throughout the day. Talk with infants about what is happening and what is going to happen next. Infants who struggle with a transition may enjoy looking at the photo of what is next.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: photos of children, toddlers, and infants engaged in various activities and routines throughout the day; lamination or contact paper to protect the photos; poster board and markers

Create a daily schedule that includes words with corresponding photos. Share the schedule with children in your care. Invite the older children to "read" the schedule to the group and to describe the corresponding photos. Post the schedule where it can be viewed by children. Invite children to revisit the schedule throughout the day to see what is going to happen next.

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BLOCK 13

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An infant is encouraged to crawl as part of open-ended play with several small toys.

Key Concepts
Roll over

Push up

Crawl

Materials Needed
3 small toys of different shapes

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This activity is designed for infants who seem ready to crawl (generally 5–7 months). "Getting ready to crawl" indicators include emerging skills in one or more of the following: (1) rolling from back to stomach or from stomach to back; (2) raising head and chest and supporting self with both hands when on tummy; (3) creeping forward with tummy on the floor; or (4) getting into a crawling position on hands and knees. This activity builds on an infant's desire to grasp and explore objects.

Create a safe and clean play area on a firm, flat surface that provides the infant with freedom to move. A padded floor or firm mat works well. Add several toys that appeal to the infant. A soft, solid color in the mat or padding will help the infant focus on the toys and his/her actions. Infants may feel overwhelmed with a lot of visual and auditory stimulation. Look at the space from an infant's perspective to ensure there are no barriers to the infant's movement.

BEGIN: [*Greet and place the infant on his/her back next to you, allowing space for the infant to move freely. Talk to the infant about playing in the area. Example: "Here is a nice place to play, Angel. You can move and play anyway you like. I will stay close to you." Put the toys near the infant so the infant needs to extend an arm or maybe move (roll over) in order to reach them. Use your understanding of the infant's motor skills in making the toy placements.*

Offer encouraging comments about the infant's actions. Example: "You put your legs up. Legs down. Now, you rolled over! Now our room looks different to you!"

Use the infant's interests and motor skills to determine the focus of the activity. Possibilities include the following:

- *If the infant rolls over, say "roll over" as the infant rolls. Enthusiastically acknowledge the infant's accomplishment. Example: "You rolled over! You moved on our mat. You know how to roll over!"*
- *If the infant (on tummy) holds up head and uses arms to push up chest, congratulate the infant on his/her emerging skill. Example: "You are holding up your head. You are pushing yourself up. You are looking around! You can see more things in our room."*

- *If the infant (on tummy) puts part of his/her body in a crawling position, enthusiastically acknowledge the infant's accomplishment. Example: "You look like you want to crawl. You are learning another way to move!"*

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

Draw attention to a toy(s). Example: Point to a toy and ask "Are you looking at this toy?" You may wish to slightly jiggle one of the toys. If the infant rolls over, move the toy so it can be seen by the infant in his/her new location. If the infant pushes up chest and head, move the toy so it can be grasped with an appropriate arm reach.

The infant will signal when it is time to change the activity. Rolling over, pushing up, or crawling practice may last 30 seconds or up to several minutes. The infant may be interested in repeating the activity over time, until he/she develops skilled crawling.]

RECAP: [*Describe the infant's actions. Examples: "We played on the floor. You moved back and forth on your hands and knees." "You are learning to roll over."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

Putting the infant on his/her back at the beginning of the activity can promote rolling over action. Closely-supervised tummy time can help infants develop strength to hold their heads up to look around. If you place the infant on his/her tummy, avoid putting the infant in a crawling position (such as putting the infant's knees under his/her body). The process of learning how to get into a crawling position is beneficial in developing balance and strength. The rate of an infant's large motor development varies considerably. Some infants creep forward with their tummy on the floor before crawling on hands and knees. Some infants crawl sooner than expected.

Watch and verbally support what the infant is trying to accomplish. The infant may be interested in reaching a toy, or may be focused on the process of moving. It is not necessary to comment constantly, but do talk often in order to communicate that you notice and appreciate the infant's efforts and accomplishments.

The infant may do some or all of the following motions:

- Reach forward with one hand
- Creep forward, pushing with his/her feet
- Pivot and turn body
- Bring knees up under body
- Maintain a hands-and-knees position
- Rock back and forth while on hands and knees
- Begin to move forward, coordinating legs and arms

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Slightly reposition the infant if he/she seems stuck in pursuing his/her interest.

Enrichment ■ Place toys on the right and left sides of the infant's view to promote decision-making about the toy to move toward or reach for. It is not necessary to coax the infant to one side or the other. ■ Place a toy under a small cloth for the infant to pursue, if interested.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An older infant explores crawling over a low foam shape.

Key Concepts
Up
Down
Crawl

Materials Needed
Covered foam shapes

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language

Place a low foam shape on a soft surface for a mobile infant to crawl over. You may wish to call the foam shape a mountain. If the low shape is part of a set, wait to introduce the bigger shape until the infant masters going over the low shape. Sit near the foam shape to offer verbal encouragement. Encourage the infant to explore the shape without assistance. Example: "You may crawl up if you like." Emphasize words related to the activity, such as crawl up and down.

Sing a song to the tune of "Bear Went Over the Mountain" to support the infant's crawling efforts. Here are possible lyrics:

Caleb went over the mountain,
Caleb went over the mountain,
Caleb went over the mountain,
He got to the other side.

Moving an infant up and over the foam shape is not suggested. Encourage the infant to develop his/her own strategies for going over the foam mountain.

What to Look For—Option 2

Some infants may promptly crawl over the foam mountain independently. Other infants may first explore the shape by touching it, sitting on it, or maybe lying on it. An infant may look at you for assurance that crawling up is alright. Describe an infant's actions, including possible hesitancies in crawling up the foam mountain. Example: "You are on your knees patting the foam shape. You can crawl up when you feel ready."

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ If an infant crawls part way up the foam shape and then seems uncertain what to do, consider touching the leg or knee that needs to move next. Do not physically move a body part(s).

Enrichment ■ Stack some flat mats to different heights, such as 2–4 inches, for infants to consider crawling up.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials needed: items of different textures and colors, bell, cloth bag, doll or animal, cloth, photos of infants, non-breakable mirror, low foam shape, cube chair

Provide a small number of objects that differ in texture or color for non-mobile infants to view and potentially reach for during floor play.

Arrange several novel items in different areas of the room for crawling infants to discover, such as a small bell inside a cloth bag. Cover a doll or animal with a cloth. Attach photos of infants to the side of low storage units for crawling infants to find. On another day, consider using clear tape to fasten a non-breakable mirror to the floor.

Mobile infants will enjoy exploring one low foam shape placed on a soft surface. Place a few soft play materials on a cube chair or other low surface for standing and walking infants to manipulate.

Family Child Care

Materials needed: foam shape, flat foam mats

Offer a larger foam shape (called a mountain in Option 2) to a toddler for crawling up and down. The toddler may need guidance for moving down the shape. Also, toddlers and preschool-age children may enjoy closely supervised play on flat foam mats stacked at different heights.

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BLOCK 14 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to the caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of babies doing different things.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of babies doing different things.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to help manage a book, and talk about and imitate babies doing different things.

Cognitive

Solving Problems

Option 1 (OO) A young infant watches a toy briefly disappear, with follow-up opportunities to explore the toy.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant watches a toy hop toward him/her and then disappear, with an opportunity to find the toy.

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

Self-Regulation

Getting Calm

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

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

Social-Emotional

Interacting With Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates with a caregiver in responsive interactions focused on gentle touches.

Option 2 (IG) Older infants participate in guided play with teddy bears focused on gentle touches.

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices eye-hand coordination while reaching for and grasping novel items.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices using thumb and finger separately while playing with a musical toy that has holes.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants practice using thumb and finger separately with a novel toy that offers finger holes and a sock rattle inside.

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

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BLOCK 14

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to the caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of babies doing different things.

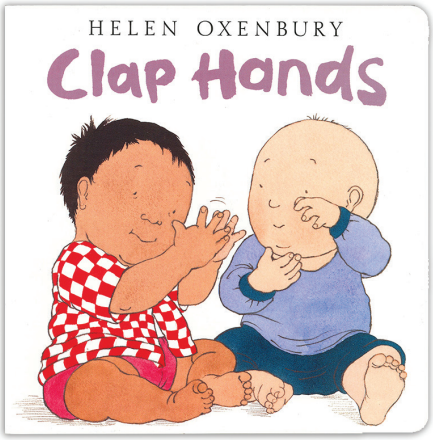
Key Concepts
Book
Look
Hands

Materials Needed
Clap Hands by Helen Oxenbury

Also Promotes
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Place the infant securely in your lap. Hold the book about 12 inches from the infant and point to the picture on the cover.*]

ACT: I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the babies?



[*Pause and acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the babies. You are kicking your legs!"*]

The babies are clapping their hands! Our book is about babies doing different things. Let's open the book and look at pictures of babies!

[*Open the book to the first page. Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:*

- *In addition to reading the few words of text on each page, use your own words to describe pictures. Example: "The babies are waving to Daddy. The babies are waving to Mommy! The babies look happy."*
- *Spend more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. It is not necessary to look at all pictures.*
- *Describe and respond to the infant's gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are kicking your legs and looking at the picture of the babies dancing."*
- *Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book sharing.*]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book about babies. You smiled at the picture of babies clapping their hands. You liked looking at the babies dancing. Thank you for sharing this book with me!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

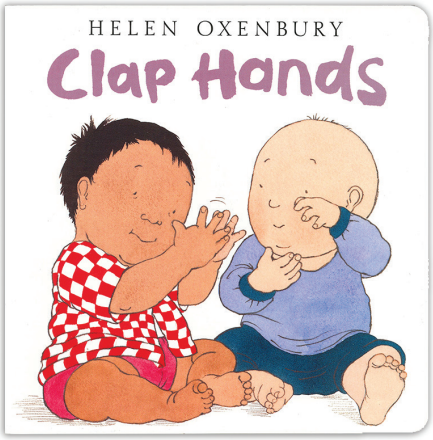
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of babies doing different things.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Hands
Clap

Materials Needed
Clap Hands by Helen Oxenbury

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to join in to look at a book about babies. Clap your hands while smiling and encourage the infant to clap his/her hands. Say "Clap! Clap!" Explain that the first picture in our book shows babies clapping their hands. Invite the infant to sit on your lap. Introduce the book by pointing to and describing the actions of babies on the cover. Example: "Look, do you see the babies? The babies are using their hands to clap! We just clapped our hands!"



Open the book and begin looking at the pictures and reading the text, using the following strategies:

- Invite the infant to help you turn the pages of the book. Turn the pages as slowly or as quickly as the infant seems to prefer. It is not necessary to look at each page.
- Read the few words of text on each page and use your own words to describe pictures.
- Spend more time on pictures that appear to be of particular interest to the infant. Offer more information about what is shown in the picture. Example: "You are looking at the babies making music. This baby is banging on a drum. This baby is pretending to blow a trumpet! The babies are having fun making different sounds."
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations.
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences. Example: "These babies are having a snack. This baby is putting food in his mouth. This baby is drinking from a cup. We have snacks in our room. You drink from milk from a cup. Look, the milk in this picture is spilling! Uh-oh!"
- Vary the tone and pace of your voice to add interest to the book sharing.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Logan. You looked at the pictures of the babies. The babies were doing different things. We clapped our hands like the babies in the pictures! You said 'bye' at the picture of the babies waving."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive Language
Expressive Language

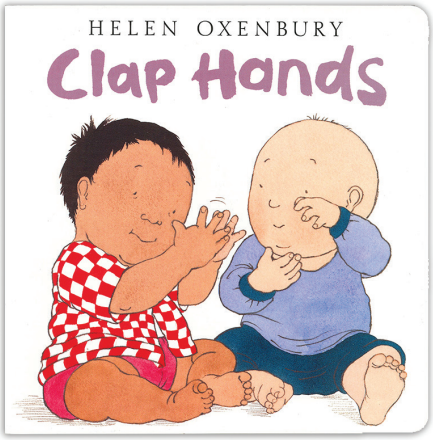
An older infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to help manage a book, and talk about and imitate babies doing different things.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Hands
Clap
Wave

Materials Needed
Clap Hands by Helen Oxenbury

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand close while you read. Invite the infant to help you hold the book and turn its pages. You may wish to keep all the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. Follow infant's cues as to how quickly or slowly to turn the pages. The infant may want to return to a favorite page several times. It is not necessary to look at all pictures.



Once the infant is comfortable and ready, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look, the babies are moving their hands. The babies are clapping their hands! We can clap our hands, too. Let's clap our hands!"

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

- Read the text on each page and use your own words to describe what is happening in the illustrations.
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you label. Example: "One of the babies in this picture is drinking from a cup. Where is the cup?"
- Spend more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Offer more information about the picture. Example: "These babies are dancing. The babies are moving their hands and bodies. This baby is clapping. This baby is turning around! I think the babies are having fun dancing together."
- Invite the infant to imitate some of the actions of the babies shown in the book, such as clapping, dancing, and waving hello.
- Describe and respond to the infant's gestures and/or vocalizations.
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences. Example: "The babies are waving. Sometimes we wave hello. Sometimes we wave bye-bye. You waved bye-bye to your daddy this morning!"
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Jordan. You turned the pages to look at the pictures. You clapped your hands. You waved your hands. You bounced your body and danced! We had fun together with our book!"

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Most infants will enjoy the illustrations of the babies in this book doing different things. Some of the actions of the pictured babies will be familiar. Look for opportunities to name and describe objects that may not be familiar to the infant, such as a trumpet or drum. Older infants are likely to differ in whether and how much they would like to imitate some of the actions shown in the book. The larger size of this board book supports an infant's motor skills for managing a book.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Remember the benefit of using your own words to describe illustrations. Point to actions and objects as you talk about them. Most of the book's brief text is general.

Enrichment ■ Point out some details of illustrations, such as one baby taking the food of another baby who is drinking from a cup. ■ Invite the infant to find and point to the hands of the babies on each page.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Clap Hands* by Helen Oxenbury, several large pots, several large plastic spoons with thick handles

Infants may enjoy making music with common objects suggested here. Share pertinent pictures of the book with infants and demonstrate how the pictured babies are banging on the pots (drums) with the spoons. Introduce the pots and spoons and invite infants to explore the new materials. Describe infants' actions with the materials.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Clap Hands* by Helen Oxenbury, several large pots, several large spoons, toilet paper or paper towel tubes—1 per toddler and child

Adapt the Interest Area suggestion to accommodate all children in your setting. Ensure each child has a turn with the pots and spoons. You may wish to play soft, but lively, music and encourage the children to "play" along. Be sure each child is given a new paper tube that has not been used by another. Younger infants may enjoy participating by holding a rattle or bell.

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BLOCK 14

Solving Problems

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

A young infant watches a toy briefly disappear, with follow-up opportunities to explore the toy.

Key Concepts
See

Materials Needed
Soft rattle
Sheer scarf

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Carry a nonmobile infant to an activity area and lay him/her on the floor facing up. Use your voice and facial expressions to put the infant at ease. Infants enjoy hearing their name and looking at the face of a familiar caregiver. Speak clearly and allow time between phrases for the infant to respond. Example: "Good morning, Tamara." (*The infant may look toward you.*) "I am glad to see you today." (*The infant may move his/her hands, arms, or legs.*) "Tamara, you have a nice smile." (*The infant may look again, increasing the length of his/her gaze.*) "Would you like to play with a soft rattle?"

Show the rattle to the infant by holding it near the center of his/her chest. Slightly move and/or jiggle the rattle while holding it in front of the infant. Describe what you are doing with the rattle. While the infant is watching the toy, cover it with the scarf for a moment. Remove the scarf and announce "Here is our toy! Now we can see our rattle!" Explain to the infant "Our toy was under the scarf. Now you see it!" If the infant looks away, draw his/her attention back to the covered toy by jiggling it.

Hold the toy for the infant to grasp. Allow time for the infant's further exploration through looking, touching, and/or mouthing. If the infant shakes the rattle and produces a sound, comment on his/her actions. If the infant releases the rattle, show it to him/her again.

If the infant has not yet learned to grasp, move the rattle close to his/her hand. Wait for the infant to react to the rattle. Describe the infant's actions. Example: "Yes, you can see our rattle. I think you are interested in the pretty color and the little face. Your arms and legs are moving." (*Pause*) "I am going to move the rattle to your hand." The infant may swipe at the rattle or close his/her fingers around it.

What to Look For—Option 1

Some infants may not react to the brief covering of the toy. It is not necessary to repeat the brief disappearance of the rattle. Object permanence develops gradually, and there are opportunities to support object permanence with other activity plans. You also may wish to offer this activity again in several weeks.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

If an infant does not respond to the rattle, try a different toy. You also may wish to alter your voice in describing the rattle. Infants generally respond to adult voices when pitched just a little higher than normal. Pronounced "baby talk" is not necessary.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Reposition the infant if he/she appears uncomfortable. ■ You may touch the infant's hand with the soft toy.

Enrichment ■ If the infant shows interest in the brief disappearance of the rattle, cover your face with the scarf. Say "peek-a-boo" when removing it. ■ If the infant shows interest in the scarf, offer it for the infant to feel. Tie the scarf into a loose knot to make it manageable for an infant to hold.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

An older infant watches a toy hop toward him/her and then disappear, with an opportunity to find the toy.

Key Concepts
Hide

Find

Materials Needed
Small novel toy (see Be Prepared)

Box with opening (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Communication/Language

Self-Regulation

Optional Reading
Baby Faces Peek-a-Boo by DK Publishing

Be Prepared: Select a small toy that will appeal to the infant involved in this activity. Many infants enjoy a toy with a smiling face. Secure a small box, about 4 x 4 inches, that has all but one side closed. The open side is used for briefly hiding the small toy during the activity.

Sit on the floor with an early mobile infant and show him/her the small toy. Place the box between you and the infant with the opening facing away from the infant.

Move the toy toward the infant with a hopping motion. Use a cheerful voice as you say, "Here comes the little (name of toy). Closer and closer and closer to your toes!" Touch the infant's foot with the toy. Repeat the hopping action, along with your words, if the infant enjoyed the action.

The infant will now be interested in watching the toy move closer to his/her foot.

Next, again hop the toy closer to the infant but this time put the toy inside the box while the infant watches. Ask the infant "Where did (name of toy) go?" Pause for the infant's response.

Some infants will eagerly look for and find the toy in the box. Enthusiastically acknowledge the infant's efforts to find the toy.

Talk with the infant about the toy hiding in the box. Example: "The toy was hopping toward your toes and went inside the box. You found our toy in the box!" Some infants may want you to repeat the toy hopping and hiding actions. Others may want to hold and explore the toy.

What to Look For—Option 2

The infant is likely to get excited during the toy hopping action because he/she knows or anticipates the toy will "get" his/her toes. Waiting for the toy to touch his/her toes involves anticipation and self-control. Support self-regulation by laughing with the infant when the toy reaches his/her toes to create a little excitement. At this age, infants often enjoy games involving anticipation. Pace the hopping so the infant can manage the excitement. Avoid tickling the infant.

Some infants may think the toy is gone and turn their attention away from the game. If the infant does not attempt to find the toy, rotate the box so the infant sees the opening with the toy inside. Encourage the infant to get the toy.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ If an infant expresses displeasure when the toy comes toward his/her feet, simply draw attention to the toy before placing it inside the box. Encourage the infant to search for the toy. ■ When you talk with the infant about how the toy was hiding in the box, use pointing and partial demonstrations to supplement your words.

Enrichment ■ If the infant is interested in a repeat of the hopping and hiding actions, vary the angle of the box. ■ In repeated actions, add challenge by tipping the box so the toy is completely covered.

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BLOCK 14

Solving Problems *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving
An older infant searches for a hidden toy.

Key Concepts
Hide
Find
Under

Materials Needed
Small toy pig
Box with opening (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Self-Regulation
Communication/Language

Optional Reading
This Little Piggy (Finger Puppet Book) by Cottage Door Press

Be Prepared: Secure a small box, about 4 x 4 inches, that has all but one side closed. The open side is used for briefly hiding the small toy during the activity.

BEGIN: [*Invite a mobile infant to play a game with the little toy pig. Place the box and toy pig on the floor.*]

ACT: Here is piggy. Piggy is a fun toy!

[*Provide time for the infant to explore and become comfortable with the novel toy. Support the infant's interest in the toy. Example: If the infant points to the eyes, talk about the pig's eyes. Point to your eyes and ask the infant to point to his/her eyes. The infant may be interested in pointing to the feet, tail, and ears of the toy pig.*

After a minute or two, ask the infant if he/she wants to play a piggy game.

Say and move the toy as follows:

Here comes a little piggy.
[*Move pig toward the infant in a playful manner.*]

Feeling very jiggy.
[*Hop the toy pig toward the infant.*]

This little piggy goes to market.
[*Tap the infant's foot with the toy.*]

This little piggy goes wee, wee, wee all the way home!
[*Cover the toy pig with the box.*]

Encourage the infant to find the toy pig. Share the infant's delight at finding the toy pig. Example: "Hooray! You found piggy!"

Move the box slightly to a new position. Repeat the sequence. Pace the game to align with the infant's interest in the game.]

RECAP: Little piggy was hiding under the box. You found our little pig.

What to Look For—Option 3

Anticipation of the pig reaching his/her foot will be fun and exciting for most mobile infants when presented in a playful manner. Generally, infants will be very interested in finding the pig. If an infant does not search for the pig, repeat the sequence and encourage the infant to look for the pig. Ask the infant "Did piggy go under the box?"

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

If an infant does not respond to the first sequence, use your own words with a different scenario. Some infants may be more interested in a simple story, such as "Piggy is looking for a home." Move the toy around and then place it into the box. Encourage the infant to search for the toy pig.

Another day, when an infant has become familiar with the game, encourage the infant to hide or cover himself/herself. Pretend to look for the infant in one place before you find him/her. Example: (*Searching*.) "Is piggy under our chair?" (*Pause*.) "Here you are, piggy!" For infants, closing their eyes or covering their eyes is the same as hiding.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Move the toy slowly so the infant sees it go under the box.

Enrichment ■ Add a second box for possible hiding. ■ Use different materials with a similar game. ■ Mobile infants will enjoy the rhyme and pictures in the optional book, *This Little Piggy* by Child's Play.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: familiar and novel toys, small balls, shallow bowls, animal and people figures, small boxes, peek-a-boo books (such as *Baby Faces Peekaboo* and books with flaps)

Provide both familiar toys and novel items for infants to explore, such as small balls in shallow bowls. Sit next to an infant and partially cover a toy that is within sight. Uncover the toy as you say "Here it is" or "Peek-a-boo!" Place several small toys under lightweight containers for infants to discover as they move around the room. Place animal figures and people figures in small boxes or enclosures that serve as houses. Share peek-a-boo books with infants.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: animal figures in a toy barn, toy, felt square, heavy paper

Toddlers are likely to enjoy the materials and activities suggested in the Interest Area. Offer a theme-based approach to hiding toys for toddlers, such as covering animal figures with felt squares.

Preschool-age children will enjoy finding items hidden in your setting. If preschool children recognize the first letter of their names, cut capital letters from heavy paper and hide them in the indoor play space.

Toddlers and preschool-age children often enjoy the "Paw Paw Patch" game and song. Two children from the gathering hide and another pair of children search for them. The song asks "Where oh, where are (child) and (child). Way down yonder in the paw paw patch." The song can be found on the Internet. Pair each toddler with a preschool-age child. Older children may be interested to know a paw-paw is a large native fruit of North America. It grows throughout Appalachia.

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BLOCK 14

Getting Calm

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating rhyme activity.

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
none

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for nonmobile infants who cannot sit independently or with support. You can become familiar with the words and actions of the "Pat-A-Cake" rhyme through an online source.

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in front of you. Smile and make eye contact.*]

ACT: Are you ready for a fun rhyme?

[*Pause and acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at me and smiling. You want to play!"*]

We are going to play *Pat-A-Cake*. I am going to hold and move your hands while we play.

[*Smile and enthusiastically recite the "Pat-A-Cake" rhyme while moving the infant's hands in the corresponding actions. You may wish to repeat the rhyme one or more times if the infant is enjoying the activity. Acknowledge the infant's pleasure. Example: "What a big smile you have! You are kicking your legs. You are telling me you like playing Pat-A-Cake!"*

Modify or stop the activity if the infant pulls back his/her hands, develops a frown, or appears at all distressed. Modifications might include reciting the rhyme without the motions or gentle clapping without the rhyme. Describe your response to the infant's reaction. Example: "You are making a sad face. Let's stop our rhyme. We can find a way to feel calm and happy."

At the conclusion of the rhyme, announce that "Our rhyme is over. All done. We can calm down now." Reposition the infant to provide a clear signal that the activity is over. Hold the infant and provide comfort, such as patting on the back, quietly singing a familiar song, or offering soft-voice reminders that it is time to rest.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you mention highlights of the activity. Example: "We had fun playing Pat-A-Cake, Jordan! You told me with your big smile that you liked the rhyme and clapping. We stopped, and you got calm again."*]

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating rhyme activity.

Key Concepts
Play
Calm

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently or with support. You can become familiar with the words and actions of the "Pat-a-Cake" rhyme through an online source.

Invite an infant to join you on the floor to play *Pat-a-Cake*. Sit facing the infant and gently hold his/her hands. Make eye contact and ensure the infant is ready to play. Explain the activity. Example: "We are going to play *Pat-a-Cake*. I am going to say the rhyme and help you clap your hands. Are you ready?"

Recite the rhyme with an enthusiastic voice while moving the infant's hands in the corresponding actions. Repeat the rhyme and actions 1–2 times if the toddler enjoys the activity. Modify or stop the activity if the infant shows any signs of distress. Describe the infant's reaction to the activity. Examples: "You had fun clapping while we played *Pat-a-Cake* today, Kiara!" "You didn't want me to hold your hands, but you enjoyed listening to the words of the rhyme, Timothy!"

After the rhyme, encourage the infant to sit and rest with you. The infant may want to sit near you or on your lap. Provide quiet time for the infant to become calm. If needed, support the infant by patting his/her back, quietly humming or singing a favorite song, or offering gentle reminders that it is time to rest. Acknowledge the infant's efforts to become calm. Example: "You had fun playing *Pat-a-Cake*! Now you are sitting with me and resting. We are feeling calm."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Infants will vary in their participation in the rhyme and in becoming calm after the stimulating experience. Follow the infant's lead during the rhyme, varying the rhythm and extent of actions to match the infant's interest and response. Some infants may let you know that they are ready for a more enthusiastic version of the rhyme by vocalizing, moving their hands, kicking their legs, or bouncing. Others may prefer a slower and quieter experience. Some infants may not want their hands to be held during the activity, but may enjoy watching you clap your own while you recite the rhyme. Ensure this activity is enjoyable for the infant.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Consistently monitor whether the rhyme might be too stimulating for an infant. Infants who might become overly excited during the activity may benefit from a slower, quieter version of the rhyme. ■ If an infant needs extra support to become calm, hold the infant while shifting your weight from one foot to the other to create a gentle swaying motion.

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

Enrichment ■ If the infant is enjoying the activity, imitate his/her facial expressions. ■ Vary the speed of the rhyme by starting slowly, speeding up, and then returning to a slower pace. ■ Invite the infant to clap his/her hands independently while you recite the rhyme.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of nursery rhyme books

Encourage infants to explore nursery rhyme books. Engage them in the rhymes they appear most interested in. This can be done with individual infants or several infants at a time. Use strategies suggested in the activity options to help infants calm down, if necessary.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

Nursery rhymes and finger plays can be enjoyed by children of all ages. Invite children to choose their favorite rhymes. Take turns reciting a simple rhyme using each child's name. Infants and toddlers will enjoy watching their older peers recite and do the motions of familiar rhymes. Older children may enjoy helping infants and young toddlers do hand motions, such as clapping for the "Pat-a-Cake" rhyme. Before moving to the next activity, invite children to rest by sitting quietly for a few moments.

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BLOCK 14

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates with a caregiver in responsive interactions focused on gentle touches.

Key Concepts
Look
Teddy bear
Touch

Materials Needed
Teddy bear

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a comfortable and secure reclining position.*

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Good morning, Antonella! I am happy to see you today. Would you like to play with me?" Acknowledge the infant's reactions. Example: "You are looking at me and smiling. I think you would like to play!"]

ACT: [*Hold the teddy bear about 12 inches from the infant. Move the teddy bear slowly from side to side to attract the infant's attention.*]

Look, I have our special friend with me today!

[*Use a different voice for the bear to greet the infant. Example: "Hello, Lincoln! Would you like to play with me?"*

Invite the infant to touch the bear.]

Our friend is a teddy bear. The teddy bear has soft fur. You can touch the soft fur!

[*Move the teddy bear close to the infant's hand and encourage him/her to touch the bear's fur. Use your voice, not the bear's voice, to describe the infant's response to the bear. Example: "You are touching the teddy bear's fur. The fur is soft. You are smiling at the bear. I think you like our teddy bear friend!"*

Use the bear to interact with the infant for several moments. Invite the infant to continue to gently touch the bear. Demonstrate a gentle touch with the teddy bear. Example: "Look, I am patting the teddy bear's head gently. I am using gentle touches. Would you like to touch our teddy bear's head? You can pat our teddy bear's head with gentle touches." Describe the infant's actions with the teddy bear. "Our friend likes your gentle touches!"

A very young infant may enjoy the bear softly touching him/her. Example: "The teddy bear is touching your arm. Do you feel the gentle touches? The teddy bear's fur is soft."

Gently redirect any touches that are not soft. Example: "Our teddy bear friend does not like you hitting his head. He likes gentle touches, like this. (Demonstrate.) We use gentle touches with the bear.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

Describe and respond to the infant's vocalizations and/or gestures, paying particular attention to any gentle touches. Example: "You touched the teddy bear's soft fur. You used gentle touches with our teddy bear friend."]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe highlights of the interaction. Example: "We had fun with our teddy bear friend! You touched the teddy bear's soft fur. You used gentle touches on the teddy bear's head. You used gentle touches on the teddy bear's arm."*]

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Older infants participate in guided play with teddy bears focused on gentle touches.

Key Concepts
Teddy bear
Touch
Gentle

Materials Needed
Teddy bears—1 per infant and caregiver

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite two infants to play with you and the teddy bears. Encourage the infants to sit near one another. Give each infant a bear to touch and hold. Use the following strategies to encourage gentle touches with the teddy bears:

- Demonstrate gentle touches with your bear and encourage the infants to imitate your actions. Example: "My teddy bear has a soft head. I am using a gentle touch to pat my teddy bear's head. Can you pat your teddy bear's head with gentle touches?"

- Recognize any gentle touches. Example: "Dylan is feeling the teddy bear's soft fur. Dylan, you are using gentle touches with your teddy bear."
- Watch for opportunities to encourage gentle touches between infants. Example: "Kinsley, you are patting Dylan's arm. You are using gentle touches with Dylan! You are watching Dylan play with his teddy bear."

If the infants remain interested in the bears, invite them to gently rock their bears back and forth. You may wish to sing a soft lullaby. At the conclusion of the song, announce that it is time for the bears to go to sleep. Show the infants how to gently place the bears in a basket or on a shelf. Acknowledge each infant's efforts to use gentle touches. Example: "Kinsley, you hugged your teddy bear gently. Then you rocked your teddy bear to sleep! Night night teddy bears!"

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Some infants will use gentle touch with occasional prompts, whereas others may need more frequent reminders. Not surprisingly, a gentle touch will be challenging for infants to use if their usual pattern of play with toys is rougher. Repeatedly demonstrating a simple act of gently patting a teddy bear may be appropriate to pursue with some infants. Promptly and strongly reinforce an infant's imitations of gentle treatment of a teddy bear.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Limiting Option 2 to two infants provides time and space for individualized attention. ■ Some infants may not like being touched by others. Acknowledge and respect an infant's preferences for touch.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Enrichment ■ Option 2 may be offered with soft animal toys. ■ Provide opportunities for older infants to touch one another in gentle ways, such as holding hands and touching palms similar to a "high five." ■ Encourage infants to say "no," or shake their head "no," when they do not like a touch from another infant.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: soft toys

Provide teddy bears, soft toy animals, or other types of soft toys for infants to play with as you acknowledge and encourage positive interactions with the toys, and with other infants. Lead older infants in simple finger plays that involve gently touching the fingers of our own hands. Also, lead children in gently clapping their hands together. Emphasize the word gentle.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

Invite children in your care to participate in a rhyme or song that involves touch. Familiar nursery rhymes, such as "Ring Around the Rosie" (holding hands) or "London Bridge" (two children hold hands in an arch for others to pass underneath), are possibilities. Encourage children to use gentle touches during the rhymes. Infants may enjoy rhymes or games that involve touch, such as *Pat-a-Cake* or *This Little Piggy*.

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BLOCK 14

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

A young infant practices eye-hand coordination while reaching for and grasping novel items.

Key Concepts
Hold

Reach

Materials Needed
Sock rattles

Small cloth toys

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

Sit on the floor facing a young infant who is on his/her back and ready to play. Greet the infant by name and present a soft toy he/she can grasp with two hands. Cheerfully encourage the infant to hold the toy. If the infant shows interest in continuing to interact with you (or on another day), put colorful socks or sock rattles on the infant. Encourage the infant to grab his/her feet. Talk with the infant about his/her reaching and holding. If an infant is not receptive to holding the object or reaching for his/her feet, hold the infant in your lap to engage in a back-and-forth interaction of making sounds and looking at one another. Present the toy again when the infant appears ready.

What to Look For—Option 1

The brief (probably 30–60 seconds) sets of actions suggested in this plan offer support for the infant's eye-hand coordination. An infant's eyes and hands begin working together in the first few months of life and become gradually more refined as the infant grows. A nonmobile infant will usually work hard to visually track objects you hold and move slowly from side to side. At about three months, the infant may begin to extend his/her arms toward a toy or other appealing objects.

The way you respond to the infant shapes the activity. The experience is enriched for the infant when you talk with the infant during the activity and describe his/her actions. Use reassuring tones and words to talk with the infant.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Lightly touch the infant's feet and hands as you name them. "Here are your little feet, Kier!"

Enrichment ■ Notice changes in the nonmobile infants as you present this activity over the next couple of weeks. Add variety with different toys.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An older infant practices using thumb and finger separately while playing with a musical toy that has holes.

Key Concepts
Hole

Finger

Materials Needed
Musical toy with holes (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Be Prepared: Toy possibilities include OBall® Musical Toy and Jingle and Shake Pal.

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor facing a mobile infant and invite him/her to play with the musical toy. Greet the infant by name and place the toy within easy reach. Encourage the infant to explore the toy on his/her own. The novel toy with the sound maker inside will almost certainly capture the infant's interest.*]

EXPLAIN: We have a toy with many holes.

[*Point to the toy.*]

Let's find out about this toy. I see a little ball inside.

[*Point to the small ball inside the toy.*]

ACT: [*Observe and describe how the infant handles the toy. Example: "You are shaking the toy. The little ball makes a musical sound." Pause for the infant's reaction.*

An infant may hold the toy with one hand and use his/her pointer finger on the opposite hand to poke the little ball. Talk about the infant's actions. Emphasize "your finger."

Some infants may be interested in moving the small rings on the side of the musical toy. Touch one small ring with one finger and make it move. Encourage the infant to touch the rings with one finger.

Continue talking with the infant about the toy with the ball inside as long as he/she remains interested.

Acknowledge persistence in exploring the toy. Example: "You are really trying to move the little ball with your finger."]

RECAP: [*Describe the toy and what happened. Example: "We played with a toy that makes sounds. Our toy has holes. You used one finger to poke the ball inside. You shook the toy and moved the little rings on the side. We heard sounds when the ball moved."*]

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

What to Look For—Option 2

The activity option supports an infant's emerging skill in isolating use of the pointer finger. At about eight months, infants begin to use the thumb and pointer finger separately from the rest of the hand. Infants will enjoy poking one finger into a toy with holes in this activity.

Before an infant can differentiate finger use, he/she typically uses a raking motion, with all fingers at the same time, to grasp small objects. The raking action strengthens fingers and develops coordination. Infants generally hold objects with their whole hand, and reach with either the left or right hand before more refined hand motions emerge. Exploring objects with two hands is supported by the ability to sit with good balance.

To an infant, it may seem the little ball can come out of the musical toy. Some infants may use fingers to poke and move the ball little ball inside, intent on freeing it. Allow the infant time to manipulate the toy on his/her own. Talk about the toy and the infant's actions. Example: "You are poking the little ball with your finger and making it move inside the toy. The little ball is inside the toy."

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Encourage an infant to point to the eyes on the musical toy.

Enrichment ■ Demonstrate spinning the rings on the side of the toy. Encourage the infant to move the rings with his/her fingers. ■ Present a toy phone and encourage the infant to push buttons using one index finger. ■ The activity can be adapted for use with 2–3 infants if each has the recommended toy.

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BLOCK 14

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

Older infants practice using thumb and finger separately with a novel toy that offers finger holes and a sock rattle inside.

Key Concepts
Finger

Materials Needed
OBalls®—1 per infant (see Be Prepared)

Sock rattles—1 per infant (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who enjoyed Option 2 and are ready for a fun challenge. Prepare one OBall® for each infant by putting one sock rattle inside. Wiggle the sock through one hole and poke it into the middle of the toy with your finger.

Sit on the floor facing the infants during a play period. Some infants may use one finger to simply touch the sock, and some infants may work to remove it. Talk with the infants about the OBall®. Acknowledge each infant for using their fingers to reach into the OBall®. Repeated experiences handling objects of various sizes and shapes begin to refine an infant's eye-hand coordination and skill.

What to Look For—Option 3

You may notice different responses to the OBall®, depending upon the development and interests of each infant. Infants who stand and walk may focus on carrying or throwing the ball. Some infants will be fascinated by the sock inside. Infants who have developed an efficient way to poke one finger into a hole may be very interested in touching the sock. If an infant removes the sock from the ball, enthusiastically recognize his/her persistence. Put the sock back into the ball or keep it in your pocket to put away later. Young infants who are at a stage of watching and reaching for toys may enjoy sitting on your lap with one OBall®. Vary your responses to the infants based upon their actions. Some infants may enjoy simply passing the ball back and forth to you. You can give your attention to one infant at a time during the activity, not unlike a waiter serving three people at one table.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ To draw attention to the sock rattle, put your finger in the hole and describe how the sock rattle moves when you touch it. ■ If the infant seems interested, but too challenged to reach the sock, pull a small portion of the sock out of a hole of the OBall®.

Enrichment ■ Offer a sock rattle and an empty OBall®. Encourage the infant to push the sock rattle into a hole.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several balls (such as whiffle balls), basket, muffin pan, toys with buttons (such as a toy phone)

Set up a space where nonmobile infants can move freely while learning to control their bodies through rolling and reaching. Include some (but not too many) different types of colorful toys. Sit on the floor and describe infants' actions.

Place several balls in a basket for early-mobile infants to remove. A muffin pan on a low surface is a good container for balls. Infants who grasp with their whole hand can remove the toys from the muffin pan. Provide whiffle-type balls with holes along with a variety of other infant balls in several areas of the room

Mobile infants will enjoy toys with buttons, such as the toy phone. Some infants may use a hand to press the buttons, and others may push a button with one index finger. The phone button serves as a target for the visually guided index finger.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: nonbreakable bottles, snap-link beads, pegboards, muffin pan

In addition to offering the activity options for infants, toddlers may enjoy putting their pointer fingers into nonbreakable bottles or poking their fingers into the holes of snap-link beads. Preschool-age and older children will benefit from playing with pegboards. Younger infants will enjoy being held and offered small toys to hold. Infants who creep will enjoy getting ahold of objects you place into a muffin pan. Infants are not expected to return the items to the pan.

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BLOCK 15 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to the caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of babies and toys.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of babies and toys.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to help manage the book and communicate about pictures of babies and toys.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) A young infant watches a toy fish manipulated by a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant explores three different types of balls.

Option 3 (IG) Infants participate in guided exploration of a toy inchworm.

Self-Regulation

Focusing and Remembering

Option 1 (OO) A young infant is encouraged to persist in exploring toys in a bucket.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant is encouraged to persist in exploring toys in a bucket.

Social-Emotional

Interacting With Others

Option 1(OO) A young infant participates with a caregiver in responsive interactions focused on a baby doll.

Option 2 (OO) An infant engages in pretend play with a caregiver using a baby doll and accessories.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant engages with a caregiver in pretend play focused on bathing a baby doll.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) An infant practices early locomotion to reach a desired item.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices moving a desirable box as part of early locomotion.

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

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BLOCK 15

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes listening to the caregiver's voice and looking at pictures of babies and toys.

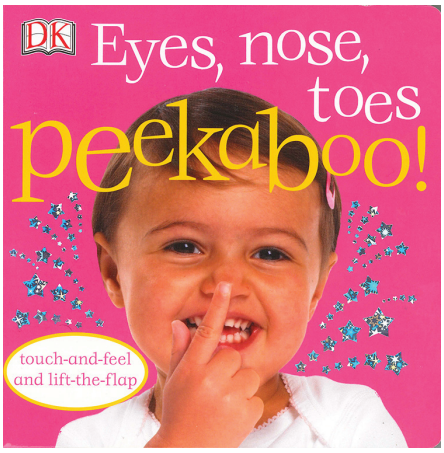
Key Concepts
Book
Look

Materials Needed
Eyes, Nose, Toes Peekaboo! by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Sit with a young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

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



ACT: I have a book for us to read together! Look, do you see the baby?

[*Pause for and acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the baby, Oliver. You are waving your arm! I think you are ready to read our book."*]

There are pictures of babies and their toys in our book. The babies are playing *Peekaboo*! Let's open the book and see what we find!

[*Open the book to the first page. Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:*

- *Use your own words to describe pictures. Point to pictured items that you describe. Use short sentences and speak clearly. Emphasize peekaboo when you reveal a picture under a flap. Example: "The baby is playing peekaboo. Look at the baby's doll! What are we going to find under the flap? Peekaboo!"*
- *Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the doll's eyes. The doll has sparkly eyes! The doll is wearing a red hat. Look, there is a heart on the doll's dress!"*
- *Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are cooing at the dinosaur, Braylen! You like dinosaurs!"*
- *Use your voice to add interest. Example: Say peekaboo with enthusiasm as you turn a flap.*]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book together. Our book had pictures of babies. The babies were playing Peekaboo with their toys! You smiled and kicked your legs when we found the bunny's ears. This was a fun book to read together!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

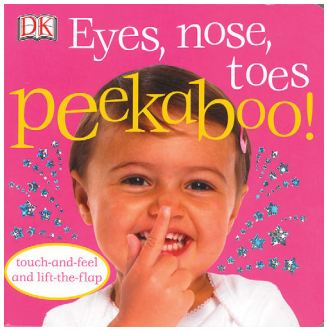
Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of babies and toys.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Touch

Materials Needed
Eyes, Nose, Toes Peekaboo! by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to and describing the picture on the book's cover. Encourage the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "See the picture of the baby? Our book is about babies playing *Peekaboo* with their toys. We can touch some of the pages and feel the babies' toys! Let's read the book and play *Peekaboo*!" Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:

- Invite the infant to help you turn the pages. Turn the pages as slowly or as quickly as the infant seems to prefer.
- Point to and name pictured objects. Example: "Look at this baby. This is the baby's ear. The baby is wondering where the bunny's ears are. Should we look under the flap and see? (*Lift the flap.*) Peekaboo! Here are the ears!"
- Invite the infant to touch textures under the flaps. Point to items you describe. Example: "Here is the teddy bear's nose. The nose is soft and squishy. Here, you can touch the teddy bear's nose! How does it feel?"
- Describe what the infant is looking at. Example: "You are looking at a dinosaur. The dinosaur has shiny red toes! Would you like to touch the dinosaur's shiny toes?"
- Spend more time talking about the pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant.
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are smiling and cooing at the baby. You like playing *Peekaboo* with the babies!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences. Examples: "You like to play *Peekaboo*! We play *Peekaboo* together when we change your diaper!" "You are touching the baby doll's eyes. The doll's eyes are blue. You have blue eyes, too! Where are your eyes? Let's find them!"
- Create anticipation as you slowly lift the flap, and then show enthusiasm as you say "peekaboo!" and reveal the picture underneath. Example: "Are you ready to play *Peekaboo*? What do you think we will see? You can help me lift the flap!"

Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Imani. We looked at pictures of babies. You smiled and kicked your legs when we played *Peekaboo* with the babies' toys! You had fun helping me lift the flaps. We found eyes, and ears, and toes! I think you liked this book."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

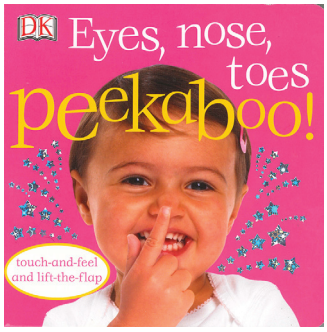
Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates in a book sharing that includes opportunities to help manage the book and communicate about pictures of babies and toys.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Touch
Peekaboo

Materials Needed
Eyes, Nose, Toes Peekaboo! by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health



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

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to share the book, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look at the picture of the baby. Our book is about babies playing *Peekaboo* with their toys! We will find the babies' toys. We can touch the toys!" Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:

- Point to and label pictured objects. Example: "These are the baby's toes. The baby wants to find the dinosaur's toes. Should we lift the flap and find the dinosaur's toes? Here, you can lift the flap. Peekaboo! Here are the dinosaur's toes!"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you name. Example: "The baby wants to find the bunny's ears. The baby has ears, too. Where is the baby's ear? You can point to the baby's ear!"
- Spend more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are pointing to the bunny's ears. The bunny's ears are long and soft. You can touch the bunny's ears. How do they feel?"
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You said boo! You are playing *Peekaboo* with the babies. We found the baby doll's eyes! Peekaboo!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences. Examples (with appropriate pointing): "The baby has eyes. You have eyes! Let's find your eyes." "The baby has a nose. You have a nose! Let's find your nose. You can point to your nose!"
- Accentuate the word peekaboo and encourage the infant to say a version of the word with you, especially when a flap is lifted. Example: "Are you ready to lift the flap? You can say peekaboo with me! Here we go. Let's see what we find!"
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Eric. You looked at the pictures of the babies. You lifted the flaps and helped me say peekaboo! You found the baby at the end of the book. You pointed to the baby's eyes and ears. Then you found your eyes and ears!"

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Many infants will delight in the familiar game of *Peekaboo* when the flaps in the book are lifted. This book also provides opportunities to touch different textures underneath the flaps. An infant may want to repeat the *Peekaboo* game several times on the same page. At the end of the book, you may wish to return to specific pictures that appealed to the infant.

On occasion an older infant may be mostly interested in lifting flaps (not in hearing about pictures). A single focus on lifting flaps only can be especially challenging in Option 3, where the infant is invited to lift flaps. Instead of having a control issue with the infant about flap lifting, you may wish to consider offering two different experiences with the book. First, offer a peekaboo approach with the infant lifting flaps and you saying what's under the flap. Second, offer a session in which it is your turn to lift the flaps and pictures are discussed in relation to what is shown under a flap. It is fine to skip pages if infant interest or time is limited.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Talk about and point to body parts on each page. This can support the infant's connections to familiar things and build useful vocabulary.

Enrichment ■ Invite an infant to play *Peekaboo* with you after the book sharing. The infant may want to cover his/her own eyes with his/her hands, or watch you cover yours. Encourage the infant to help you say peekaboo! Infants may feel more comfortable playing *Peekaboo* with you briefly covering only your eyes, leaving your face in view during the game.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Eyes, Nose, Toes Peekaboo!* by DK Publishing; several toys from the book, such as a baby doll, teddy bear, stuffed bunny, sheer or thin scarf

Most infants enjoy playing *Peekaboo*. Share the book with infants during floor time. Provide a doll or stuffed toy for each infant to touch and hold. Gently place the scarf over each toy and invite infants to help you say peekaboo as you remove the scarf. Provide anticipation, enthusiasm, and then excitement when the scarf is removed and the toy is revealed. Older infants may want to play *Peekaboo* with the scarf and their toy on their own. Infants may enjoy this game being repeated several times.

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: sheer or thin scarves—1 per child

Peekaboo is a favorite game of many toddlers and preschool-age children. Children may be more comfortable hiding under the scarf (compared to hiding behind a solid item) because they are able to see through the sheer fabric. Also, a scarf helps infants and toddlers know that their trusted caregiver is still there! Invite older children to play the game with younger toddlers and infants. Older children will likely enjoy watching the delight of younger toddlers and infants as they remove their scarf and say peekaboo!

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BLOCK 15

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

A young infant watches a toy fish manipulated by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch

Materials Needed
Soft, colorful fish toy

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

Optional Reading
My Very First Book of Shapes by Eric Carle

Place an infant who is not yet crawling in a comfortable, secure, reclining position across from you or on the floor. Show the toy fish to the infant when he/she is alert. Hold the toy about 12–15 inches from the infant's face. Softly say the infant's name and the name of the toy. Example: "Sarah, we have a toy fish. Our fish has pretty colors. You can watch our fish." Keep the toy still so the infant can focus his/her eyes. When the infant focuses visual attention on the little fish, slowly move it in a horizontal movement across his/her visual field. The infant may move his/her head and eyes in order to follow the toy. Describe the fish's movement and the infant's actions. Example: "Here is our toy fish. You are watching the fish with your eyes." Use a soft voice to acknowledge the infant's efforts. Example: "You are watching the toy fish move."

What to Look For—Option 1

This will be a brief yet important experience for the infant. Visually following a toy that moves in different directions requires effort. Allow ample time for the infant to focus on the toy fish before moving it. Repeating the activity will be satisfying for most young infants, but a brief break may be appropriate. Be sure to move the toy slowly and avoid quickly changing direction. Offer the toy to the infant if he/she reaches out to grasp it.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Pace the movement of the toy fish at a comfortable level for the infant. Example: If an infant maintains his/her gaze on the toy, hold the toy steady until the infant appears ready to watch it move.

Enrichment ■ Repeat the activity with a different type of appealing toy. Infants typically like a soft toy with a face. ■ Slowly move the toy from side to side at a higher or lower level. That is, slightly change the horizontal position of the toy but continue to move the toy back and forth (not up and down).

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant explores three different types of balls.

Key Concepts
Look
Feel
Ball

Materials Needed
3 small balls with different textures
Basket or container

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Place the balls in a container. Invite an infant who can sit with support or independently to play with you and some balls. Place the container with balls in front of the infant. Sit across from the infant. Point to each of the balls in the container as you say something about the texture or shape of each. Example: "This ball has little holes. This ball has bumpy things. This ball has things sticking out of it." Pointing to characteristics of each ball (without picking up a ball) is important because the infant may not understand most of your words.

Provide time for the infant to look at the collection of balls. Then encourage the infant to pick up and feel a ball if he/she has not done so already. Describe the infant's actions with a ball(s). Mention a characteristic of a ball if the characteristic seems to be of interest to the infant. Example: "You are feeling the bumps on the ball." Bring the activity to a close when he/she no longer shows interest.

What to Look For—Option 2

There are likely to be differences across infants in how they participate in the activity. An infant may not focus on the shape or texture of a ball as intended in the activity description. Some infants may be interested in removing all of the balls, whereas others may focus on only one. Some infants may want to roll a ball, hand a ball to you, or move balls out of, and then back into, the container. An infant may use his/her mouth to explore a ball. Follow the infant's lead in exploring the balls. Describe the infant's actions and draw attention to characteristics of a ball without directing the exploration. If the infant hands a ball to you, thank the infant and then pass it back. Most infants will use two hands to hold and manipulate a ball.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Pick up and offer a ball to the infant if he/she does not pick up a ball.

Enrichment ■ Provide a ball with holes in it as an additional difference to explore.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

Infants participate in guided exploration of a toy inchworm.

Key Concepts
Feel

Hear

Look

Materials Needed
Lamaze® musical inchworm toy (or similar)—1 per infant and caregiver

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Limit the number of participants to available toys. It is important for each infant to have a toy inchworm for this activity.

BEGIN: [*Invite several infants to sit with you on the floor. Give each infant a toy inchworm.*]

EXPLAIN: Here is a toy for us to play with. This toy is called an inchworm. An inchworm is an animal. Let's find out about our toy.

ACT: Our toy has eyes. Do you see the inchworm's eyes?

[*Point to the toy's eyes.*]

Do you see the eyes? We can touch the eyes of our toy.

[*Encourage infants to touch or point to the eyes of the toy. Then encourage infants to point to their own eyes. Demonstrate by pointing to your own eyes.*]

We have eyes, too! Let's all point to our eyes.

We look at things with our eyes. We are looking at each other. We are looking at our toy!

Our toy is soft. Would you like to feel our toy?

[*Demonstrate touching the toy. Then demonstrate squeezing the toy with both of your hands.*]

I am squeezing the toy. I am using both of my hands to squeeze the toy. You can squeeze your toy, too!

[*Encourage infants to squeeze their toy. Then point to your ear as you draw attention to hearing the toy make a noise.*]

Did you hear our toy make a noise? We heard a sound when we squeezed our toy!

[*Describe infants' actions and reactions. Example: "Devon, your toy squeaked! You squeezed your toy and it made a noise!"*

Encourage repeated squeezing of the toy and talk about how squeezing can make the toy make a noise.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

Then demonstrate squeezing the crinkle section of the toy. Draw attention to your action and the part of the toy that makes a crinkle noise. Example: "We can hear a quiet crinkle sound."

Encourage repeated squeezing of the crinkle section and talk about how squeezing this part of the toy makes a crinkle noise.

Then gently shake the toy. Draw attention to the rattle sound when the toy is shaken.

If infants remain interested in the toy, invite them to move their toy on the floor. Make up a pretend destination or reason for moving the toy. Example: "Our toy is a little animal. Our toy wants to meet another toy! Let's pretend our toys are moving on the floor to meet each other."]

RECAP: [*Say and demonstrate each of the actions used with the toy during the session. Example: "We played with a fun toy. We felt our toy. We squeezed our toy. We shook our toy. We listened to our toy!"*]

What to Look For—Option 3

The toy used in this activity is pleasing for most infants to touch and manipulate. The size and shape are novel. The toy is soft and easy to hold. The sounds an infant can make with the toy are also appealing. Look for opportunities to draw attention to cause-effect connections when sounds are made with the toy. We squeeze the toy. The toy makes a sound. Also look for opportunities to point out the sections (bumps) of the toy. This feature of the toy is not explicitly addressed in the activity description, but infants may notice the colorful sections on their own. Emphasize how we can move our hands along the toy to feel its parts.

The word inchworm is introduced in the suggested opening segment of the activity, but infants are not expected to learn or say this word. The activity plan's suggested talk with infants does not use the word after introducing it.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If an infant seems interested in (but uncertain about) how to feel or make a sound with the toy, offer a demonstration with the infant's toy directly in front of the infant.

Enrichment ■ Draw attention to the different types of sounds by manipulating the toy to make each sound in a sequence: squeak, crinkle, rattle. Emphasize how the sounds can be made with the toy.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials needed: rattles, small balls with textures, stacking cups, loose stacking rings in a bowl, soft texture bears, books with textures (such as *Baby Touch and Feel* by DK Publishing), toys with holes (such as a whiffle ball), and books with holes (such as *Little Puppy Finger Puppet Book* by Chronical Books, LLC.)

Provide a small collection of rattles and small balls with texture for non-mobile infants to explore. On another day, provide stacking cups, loose stacking rings in a bowl, soft texture bears, and books with textures (such as *Baby Touch and Feel Puppies and Kittens* by DK Publishing). For mobile infants, arrange loose items to dump and fill in stacking cups. Also, offer a small grouping of toys with holes, such as a whiffle ball, and books with holes.

Family Child Care

Materials needed: balls of different sizes, basket or non-breakable container

The Option 2 activity may prompt toddlers and preschool-age children to also want to play with balls. Toddlers may be interested in rolling balls of different sizes. For preschool-age children, set up a target using a basket or non-breakable containers and encourage children to gently toss balls into a container.

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BLOCK 15

Focusing and Remembering

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

A young infant is encouraged to persist in exploring toys in a bucket.

Key Concepts
Look
Reach
Touch

Materials Needed
3–5 different toys (see Be Prepared)
Small bucket or container

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can grasp a small item. Gather 3–5 different small toys, such as soft rattles or people figures. Select toys that are of interest to the infant and are clearly different from one another, such as in color, shape, and/or texture. Also, select toys that the infant involved in this activity can easily grasp with one hand. Keep in mind the infant is likely to explore items with his/her mouth. Place the toys in the bucket.

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a secure, comfortable, reclining position. Smile and make eye contact with the infant.*]

EXPLAIN: I have some fun toys!

[*Display the bucket.*]

This is a bucket. There are toys inside our bucket. Let's look inside and see what we find!

ACT: [*Tilt the bucket so the infant can see inside. Pause for the infant to look at toys in the bucket.*

Encourage the infant to reach for and grasp a toy that is inside the bucket. If the infant does not grasp a toy, hold and briefly describe a toy and offer it to the infant to touch or hold. Example: "This is a rattle, Emma. The rattle is soft. I am touching the rattle. Would you like to touch or hold the rattle?"

If the infant does not touch or hold the toy, set it aside and encourage the infant to look again at toys in the bucket. If the infant does not grasp a toy while looking in the bucket or does not look in the bucket, again hold and briefly describe a toy and offer it to the infant to touch or hold.

Support the infant's approach to toys in the bucket. He/she may want to look at, touch, or grasp one item only, or all items. He/she may want to look at,but not touch, toys.

If the infant drops a toy he/she is holding, pick it up and offer it to the infant. If the infant does not want the toy, or drops it again, display a different toy in the bucket.

Describe the infant's actions throughout the activity. Examples: "You are looking into the bucket, Alejandro. You are smiling! You want to see what is in our bucket." "You are reaching into the bucket, Emma. Which toy are you going to pick?"

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

Point and gesture frequently because the infant will not understand most of your words. Remember the importance of your facial expressions.

Respond to the infant's vocalizations.

Gently end the activity when the infant shows signs of losing interest, such as looking elsewhere (for more than a few seconds) or fussing.]

RECAP: [*Smile, make eye contact, and briefly describe what happened. Example: "You had fun looking at toys in our bucket! You held some toys. You really liked moving the rattle!*]

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An older infant is encouraged to persist in exploring toys in a bucket.

Key Concepts
Look
Reach
Take out

Materials Needed
5–7 small toys (see Be Prepared)
Small bucket or container

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently or with support. Gather 5–7 different small toys, such as soft animal toys or toy vehicles. Select toys that are of interest to the infant and are clearly different from one another, such as in color, shape, and/or texture. Place the toys in the bucket.

Invite an infant to sit with you on the floor. Sit so the infant can see your face. Explain there are some toys in a bucket. We want to find out what toys are in the bucket. Place the bucket in front of the infant and encourage the infant to look inside. Provide time for the infant to look inside the bucket. Encourage the infant to reach for and take out a toy so we can find out what's in the bucket. Say the name of a toy the infant removes from the bucket and provide time for the infant to explore the toy if he/she wishes. Then explain that we want to find out what other toys are in the bucket. Encourage the infant to take out another toy. Repeat this process, including saying the name of the toy and providing time for the infant to explore the toy, until all toys have been removed.

If an infant dumps all toys out of the container (which is an efficient way to find out what is inside!), invite him/her to point to or hold each toy, one at a time. Say the name the toy and then invite the infant to point to or hold another toy. Encourage the infant to point to or hold each of the toys, one at a time, as you say (or the infant says) its name. It is fine for you to point to each toy as you say its name, but only if the infant remains attentive visually. Do not impose the process of pointing to or holding and naming each toy if the infant has no interest in doing so.

Bring the activity to a close after each toy has been identified or the infant loses interest.

Periodically during the activity, enthusiastically acknowledge the infant's persistence. Example: "You are working hard to find out what is in our bucket, James." Also, provide periodic progress reports. Example: "We are almost done figuring out what is in our bucket!" Throughout the activity, describe the infant's actions and respond to vocalizations.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Infants will differ in how long they persist in attending to the toys. Attention spans can be very short at this young age. There may be competing interests or toys in the room that an infant may prefer to explore. A longer period of focus on the toys is more beneficial than no or minimal attention, of course, but this activity is not a test. It certainly is not necessary to look at or point to or hold each toy. Positively recognize the approach an infant brings to the activity.

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Remember this is a one-to-one activity. Appealing toys can be selected for a specific infant. The toys you include will likely vary across infants. ■ Increase or decrease the challenge of the activity by using more or fewer toys.

Enrichment ■ At the conclusion of Option 2, invite the infant to put all toys back into the bucket.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several containers (such as baskets or small tubs), assortment of familiar small toys

Place the toys into the containers. You may wish to group toys in meaningful combinations. Example: Animal figures in one tub or basket and toy cars in another. Invite several infants to explore the contents of the containers. Infants may dump the toys or reach to pull out a toy of their choice. Invite infants to place the toys back into the containers.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several shape-sorting toys of varying challenge levels

Options 1 and 2 for infants described activities that may be accomplished with shape-sorting toys for toddlers and preschool-age children. Ensure the sorter you select for toddlers is appropriately matched to their skill. Older children may enjoy a sorting toy with multiple shapes and sides.

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BLOCK 15

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates with a caregiver in responsive interactions focused on a baby doll.

Key Concepts
Look

Doll

Materials Needed
Fabric baby doll

Infant pillow/cushion

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a secure, comfortable, reclining position. Smile and begin talking with the infant.*]

ACT: [*Hold the doll about 12 inches from the infant. Move the doll slowly from side to side to attract the infant's attention.*]

Look, I have a baby doll for us to play with today! Our doll has eyes and a mouth. Maybe you would like to touch and hold the doll.

[*Move the doll to the infant's middle to encourage him/her to touch, grasp, or hold the doll.*

Describe the infant's actions with the doll. Examples: "Your eyes got wide when you saw our baby doll. You are looking at the baby doll." "You reached for the baby doll as soon as you saw it, Leo! I moved it closer. Now you are holding the baby doll."

Continue interacting with the infant as he/she explores the doll. Respond to vocalizations and/or facial expressions. Wrap up the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest.]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe highlights of the interaction. Example: "You liked touching the baby doll. You looked at the baby doll's eyes. You touched the baby doll's hair. Then you held the baby doll! Thank you for playing with me today!"*]

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BLOCK 15

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant engages in pretend play with a caregiver using a baby doll and accessories.

Key Concepts
Baby
Bottle
Blanket

Materials Needed
2 baby dolls
2 baby bottles
2 doll blankets
Doll bed (Enrichment tip)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to join you to play with dolls. Introduce the dolls and give one to the infant to hold and explore. Talk with the infant about his/her actions with the doll. After several moments, introduce the bottle and blanket. Encourage the infant to be the "play leader" and explore the materials in his/her own way.

As the infant interacts with the doll and accessories, watch for opportunities to provide prompts that may extend the infant's pretend play. Examples:

- "My baby is hungry. I am going to feed my baby a bottle. You are holding the baby bottle. Maybe your baby is hungry too. Do you want to feed your baby?"
- "You put the blanket over your baby. I think your baby is going night night. Let's say 'night night' to your baby."
- "You are holding and rocking your baby. Maybe your baby is going to sleep. Shhhh… let's whisper so your baby can sleep." (*This suggestion should be used in a playful manner. The infant is not expected to whisper or to be quiet.*)
- "You are touching the baby's hair. The baby has brown hair. You have brown hair, too! Here is your brown hair. (*Touch infant's hair.*) What else do you see on your baby doll?"

Pause at important times during the interactions so the infant has a clear opportunity to contribute.

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BLOCK 15

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant engages with a caregiver in pretend play focused on bathing a baby doll.

Key Concepts
Baby
Bath
Wash

Materials Needed
2 water-safe baby dolls
2 washcloths
2 medium-size towels
Tub (see Be Prepared)
Towel or mat
Tear-free baby shampoo

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Cognitive

Be Prepared: The tub should be large enough for two dolls. Place about a half inch of warm water in the tub and add a few drops of tear-free baby shampoo to provide a small amount of bubbles. Arrange the tub and materials on the large towel or mat.

Invite an infant to join you to play with the baby dolls and accessories. Introduce the play materials and place one of the dolls in the tub to take a bath. The infant may imitate your actions with the second baby doll, or he/she may choose to explore the play materials in different ways. Look for opportunities to extend his/her actions with the materials. Examples:

- "You are looking at the bubbles and smiling, Josiah. Would you like to touch the bubbles? I will help you roll up your sleeve. Then you can put your hand in the water!"
- "I am washing my baby. Would you like to wash your baby in the water? Here is a cloth you can use to clean your baby."
- "Ooh, look at the water dripping from your washcloth! Plip, plop goes the water. You like watching the water drip down."
- "You are covering the baby with the washcloth. You are washing the baby! Your baby is getting very clean."
- "My baby is all clean. I am going to dry my baby with a towel. Would you like to use a towel when your baby is done with the bath?"

Conclude the play by describing highlights of the infant's participation.

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of these options promotes responsive caregiver-infant interactions with materials that encourage simple, familiar play themes. It is important for the infant to explore materials in his/her own way. The prompts are offered in the activity descriptions as possible ways to extend an infant's play, not as ways to direct the infant's use of materials. Watch the infant's reaction to the play materials to determine how to proceed with the activity. In Options 2 and 3, some will explore all or most materials. Other infants may focus primarily on characteristics of the baby doll. Some infants may be especially interested in the accessories, such as the bottle in Option 2, or water dripping from the washcloth in Option 3. In Option 3, an infant might spend all of his/her time touching bubbles in the bathwater. Acknowledge and affirm all types of participation.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ In Option 2, some infants may place the toy bottle in their own mouth instead of using it to feed the doll. This indicates that the infant knows what the toy bottle represents, which is a real bottle that he/she may drink from regularly. Acknowledge this understanding and provide gentle redirection. Example: "You know this is a bottle, like the bottle you drink from! This bottle is a toy. You can use it to feed your baby! Can you give your baby the bottle?" ■ If an infant seems reluctant to get his/her hands wet in Option 3, offer a slightly damp washcloth (instead of the tub) for washing the doll. ■ If splashing becomes an infant's focus in Option 3, gently redirect the infant to drying the doll with the towel and then move to another activity.

Enrichment ■ At the end of the activity in Option 1, wrap the baby doll in a blanket and explain that the baby is going to sleep. ■ Provide a toy doll bed so an infant might engage in routines for helping his/her doll go to sleep. ■ Provide several stacking cups in different sizes for the infants to use in Option 3. It may be helpful to demonstrate how the cups can be used to scoop and pour water over the babies.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several baby dolls, 2 baby bottles, 2 doll blankets

Offer an interest area that supports infants in repeating or extending their actions in one of the activity options. Provide the baby dolls and accessories. Some infants may want to simply touch, hold, or rock the dolls. Others may use a bottle or blanket while playing with a doll, similar to the opportunities for play in Option 2. Describe each infant's actions with the play materials.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several water-safe baby dolls, bath props (such as washcloths, towels, cups, rubber ducky toys), water table with two inches of warm water (for toddlers and older children), tub or basin with half inch of water (for mobile infants), tear-free baby shampoo—add several drops to the water table and tub/basin

Children of all ages enjoy water play. Bath time is a familiar experience that provides new opportunities to explore both pretend play and the sensory experience of a water table. Invite children to wash the baby dolls using the bath time materials. Several older toddlers and children can play together at the water table. You may wish to limit the tub/basin play to 1–2 mobile infants at a time. Supervision of the water is needed at all times. Younger infants may enjoy playing with a baby doll and a damp washcloth.

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BLOCK 15

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An infant practices early locomotion to reach a desired item.

Key Concepts
Reach

Move

Materials Needed
2 toys

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who seems ready, or is just beginning, to creep or crawl. Select one favorite toy and one appealing toy that is unfamiliar (or less familiar) to the infant. The toys are to serve as sources of motivation for the infant to creep or crawl.

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor near the infant. The activity space should be free of toys and other objects. Place each toy slightly out of the infant's reach in different directions, but both in full view of the infant. Choose a distance that matches the infant's emerging ability to creep or crawl.*]

EXPLAIN: Here are special toys you can play with.

[*Point to or hold the toys, one at a time, as you describe each with enthusiasm. Example: "Malik, here is the (name of toy) you like to hold and shake. Our other toy is fun to play with. It can make a sound!"*]

ACT: [*Offer verbal support for the infant's interest in or emerging ability to move toward a toy. Examples: "Malik, you are on your tummy holding yourself up with your arms! You are getting so strong!" "Keep trying! You are ready to creep!"*

Encourage the infant to move closer to the desired toy. Examples: "Alright! You are reaching so hard for the toy!" "Great! You are moving on your tummy!"

If the infant shows signs of frustration, move the toy slightly closer to the infant without eliminating the challenge of creeping or crawling.

After the infant reaches and explores the first desired toy, draw attention to the second toy by holding and/or manipulating it. Ask the infant if he/she would like to play with this toy now. Provide verbal support for the infant's movement toward the toy. It is not necessary for the infant to pursue the second toy.

Describe the infant's actions throughout the activity without interfering with his/her interests.]

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

RECAP: [*Describe what the infant did. Example: "You played with (name of toy). You turned over on your tummy and moved your body to get the (name of toy). Getting a toy can be a lot of work! You are getting stronger."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

Infants often show a unique preference and method for early locomotion. An infant may move forward while on his/her tummy (creeping) or use both hands and both legs to push up and move his/her body (crawling). An infant may move one leg and drag the other leg when crawling. Some infants begin early locomotion by going backwards.

It is not necessary to teach or correct an infant's approach to creeping or crawling. Provide time and space for an infant to explore how to move his/her body. The exploration is likely to be beneficial for both cognitive and motor development. Example: In a creeping position with tummy and torso on the floor, reaching forward with one hand helps develop strength and flexibility in the torso and, at the same time, can support the infant's problem-solving idea of how to get ahold of a desired item.

Although the activity plan uses a toy as an incentive for an infant to move, interacting with you may be the primary interest of some infants. Being with you may be more interesting to an infant than a toy. Support this interest by encouraging the infant to come closer to you. Example: "Maybe you would like to talk with me. You're almost next to me!" Also, an infant may look to you for assistance in securing the toy. Acknowledge the infant's bid for your help and offer assurances that he/she can get the toy on his/her own. It may be appropriate to move a toy closer to the infant, as suggested in the activity plan, but avoid simply handing a toy to the infant.

Wellness issues, such as teething, may affect an infant's interest in getting ahold of a toy. Offer the activity on another day if an infant expresses a need for extra comfort or prefers quiet play to more expansive activity.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Sit next to the desired toy to provide the infant with an additional incentive (you!) for creeping or crawling. Make eye contact and smile. ■ Place your hand on the floor, midway between the infant and the desired toy, so the infant can touch your hand, if he/she wishes, while moving toward the toy. Example: "Can you reach my hand? You're getting close to the toy!" ■ Offer a different toy(s) if your selection(s) seems to be of limited or no interest.

Enrichment ■ Involve several infants in the activity if they have similar large motor abilities and are ready for play. ■ Offer additional reaching challenge by placing one of the toys on a slightly elevated surface, such as a large foam wedge, a low step, or large block. You may wish to use two different elevated surfaces in two different locations, one for each toy.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An older infant practices moving a desirable box as part of early locomotion.

Key Concepts
Push

Carry

Materials Needed
2 small storage boxes (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Be Prepared: Secure two small clear storage boxes and decorate their interiors with stickers, colorful crinkled paper, and/or other light paper items that will be exciting to the infant. Make one of the boxes heavier by placing in it some common items from your room, such as small blocks. Use clear tape to firmly affix the tops of the boxes.

Provide the lighter box to an infant who is crawling or walking. Encourage a crawling infant to push the box along the carpet as he/she crawls to a destination of your choice. The infant may put weight on the box with one or both arms as he/she crawls. Invite a walking infant to carry the lighter box to the destination you choose. After an infant reaches the destination, encourage him/her to return the box to the starting point or use the heavier box for the return. Acknowledge the infant's efforts. Examples: "You are pushing the box in front of you. You are making the box slide!" "Wow, you are carrying a big box!"

After moving the box several times, the infant may wish to play with the box along with several other toys. Place toys, such as small blocks or soft animals, near the box for the infant to explore with the box. An infant may use the box as a platform for playing with a toy(s), or tap on the box as if it is a drum, or push the box with one or more other toys on top of it.

What to Look For—Option 2

Most infants will have fun pushing a box along the carpet as they crawl. The box may move alongside the infant or in front of the infant. An infant might push the box forward by putting his/her hands on the top and using legs to move forward. Infants who can walk often resort to crawling for some locomotion tasks. Anticipate that an infant with walking skills may opt to crawl with the box. There is not one preferred way to move the box, and it is not necessary or appropriate to teach an infant how to move a box.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Offer a gesture of pushing the box when you invite a crawling infant to move the box. ■ Walk to the destination when you describe it. You may wish to position yourself at the destination after the infant begins crawling or walking with the box.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

Enrichment ■ For a walking infant, place the box on the floor for the infant to pick up (rather than hand the box to the infant for his/her journey). ■ An infant with established walking skills may want to try carrying both boxes (one in each hand or the two boxes stacked in front of him/her).

Interest Area

Materials Needed: barrier, such as a low shelf, cloth books, board books, toys

Arrange cloth books and board books with some favorite toys in spaces infants can access. Change the toys during the week so there are familiar items along with 1–2 novel items. For mobile infants, put a low barrier in the play space with toys on either side. Infants who readily creep or crawl may go around the barrier to reach toys.

Family Child Care

Make up action lyrics related to the motor development of specific children in your setting. Sing your lyrics to the tune of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush." You can learn the tune by searching for an online source. Below are some suggestions for motor actions of different ages of children:

- Kicking feet: We see Winne kicking her feet, kicking her feet, kicking her feet. We see Winne kicking her feet, so early in the morning.
- Reaching for toys: "This is the way Angel gets a toy, Angel gets a toy . . ."
- Crawling on hands and knees: "This is the way Kevin crawls, Kevin crawls . . ."
- Walking unsupported: "We see Diego walking alone, walking alone . . ."
- Hopping on one foot: "I see my friends hopping on one foot, hopping on one foot . . ."

Source of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush" nursery rhyme is: Moorat, J. S. & Woodroffe, P. (1980). *Thirty old-time nursery songs*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art/Thames & Hudson

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BLOCK 16 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Sounds

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a caregiver-led nursery rhyme with hand movements.

Option 2 (IG) Older infants participate together in a caregiver-led nursery rhyme with hand movements.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (IG) Infants engage in guided play with cups and small toys.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant engages in open-ended play with toys initially lined up on the edge of a table.

Self-Regulation

Paying Attention

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices focusing on a caregiver's hand-clapping actions.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices focusing on a caregiver's hand-clapping actions with the opportunity to also clap hands.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver during a story of a mama bear and baby bear.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in nurturing interactions with a caregiver during a song.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in nurturing interactions with a caregiver while playing with a baby doll.

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (IG) Infants practice coordinating the use of their hands to play with toy musical instruments.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices turning pages of a board book.

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

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BLOCK 16

Exploring Sounds

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

A young infant participates in a caregiver-led nursery rhyme with hand movements.

Key Concepts
Song
Listen
Watch

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Sign and Sing Along: Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star by Annie Kubler

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the lyrics and tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a secure, comfortable, reclining position. Ensure the infant can clearly see you. Smile and encourage the infant to make eye contact with you.*]

I have a song to share with you! It is fun to sing a song!

[*Pause for and acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are smiling. I think you want to hear our song."*]

EXPLAIN: Our song is about a star. I am going to move my hands like they are a star in the song! You can listen to the song and watch my hands. Are you ready for our song?

ACT: [*Maintain eye contact with the infant and sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" slowly. Move your hands in pronounced, simple ways that correspond with the words of the song. Open and close your fingers rhythmically to represent twinkling stars. Raise your hands and gently wave them back and forth when you sing "up above the world so high."*

After one round of the song, describe the infant's reactions. Example: "You watched my hands pretend to be twinkling stars! Look, now my hands are up high! The stars are twinkling high in the sky."

Repeat the song and movements if the infant remains engaged. Encourage the infant to do a simple hand or arm action(s), such as move his/her hands and/or raise his/her arms.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the activity. Example: "I sang a song about a star. You watched my hands pretend to be twinkling stars. Then you moved your hand! This is a fun song to share together!"*]

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BLOCK 16

Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

Older infants participate together in a caregiver-led nursery rhyme with hand movements.

Key Concepts
Song
Star

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Sign and Sing Along: Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star by Annie Kubler

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the lyrics and tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

Invite 2–3 infants to join you for a song. Sit facing infants and introduce the song. Example: "Our song is about a star. The star is twinkling. We can pretend our hands are twinkling stars. (*Open and close hands several times.*) Some of us may know this song!"

Sing one round of the song slowly with corresponding hand actions. Smile and maintain eye contact with the infants throughout. Acknowledge infants' reactions to the song and motions.

Invite infants to help you with another round of the song. Example: "Let's all pretend to have twinkling stars! We can open and close our hands like this." (*Demonstrate.*) Repeat the song slowly, encouraging infants to imitate your motions of opening and closing your hands. Some infants may imitate you by raising their hands during the song. Others may focus on the act of opening and closing their hands.

Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Examples: "Noah, you are pretending your hands are twinkling stars! You are opening and closing your hands." "Victoria, you said 'star!' Our song is about a twinkling star!"

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Infants enjoy familiar songs, especially when offered with enthusiastic facial expressions. Some older infants may imitate some of your hand movements or begin to move up their arms when you sing and demonstrate "above." Watch for and acknowledge small hand or arm movements that seem related to the song. Younger infants especially cannot be expected to make a "twinkle" action with their fingers, although they are likely to enjoy watching you do so. Infants may vocalize with cooing, babbling, and later saying one of the rhyme's words. Others may listen to your voice and watch your movements. Positively recognize different forms of participation.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Invite an infant to read a *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* book with you before or after offering the rhyme. ■ Sing the song with few or no hand movements if it appears too challenging for an infant to focus on your actions. ■ A younger infant may enjoy being held in your arms and gently swaying as you sing the song or say its lyrics.

Enrichment ■ Emphasize "up" as you sing and move your hands. ■ Offer additional movements with the song, using signs suggested in the Optional Reading book.

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BLOCK 16

Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

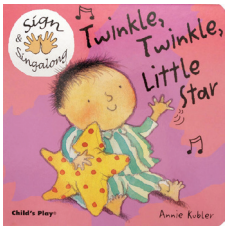
Interest Area

Materials Needed: several caged bells

Provide bells for infants to manipulate during a follow-up offering of the activity plan's song and other nursery rhymes. Show and describe how to make a sound with a bell. Point to your ear as you describe "listen," "hear," or "sound." Infants may want to repeat songs. Older infants may be interested in making different bell sounds at different tempos.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Sign and Sing Along: Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* by Annie Kubler



Share the book with a mixed-age gathering of children as a complement to the activity options for infants. Encourage toddlers and older children to try the signs described in the book. Younger infants and toddlers will enjoy listening and watching as you share the book. Infants may enjoy holding a caged bell or rattle during the activity.

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BLOCK 16

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

Infants engage in guided play with cups and small toys.

Key Concepts
Big
Little
In
Out

Materials Needed
Non-breakable cups—1 per infant and caregiver

Small toys—1 per infant and caregiver (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Baby Touch and Feel First Words by DK Publishing

Be Prepared: This activity is for mobile infants. Select small toys or other play items that will fit fully inside the cups to be used in the activity. If possible, use cups that are larger than infants typically use in your setting. Place extra materials in a bag or basket for infants who join the gathering after you begin.

Invite several infants to join you on the floor. Give each infant one cup and one small toy. Present the two items separately so the infant can have the experience of putting the toy in the cup. Name each item when you offer it to an infant. Emphasize the toy is little and the cup is big. Explain that we can do different things with our little toys and big cups.

Demonstrate placing one toy into your cup and taking it out again. Emphasize the words in and out. Encourage each infant to put a toy into his/her cup. Example: "Angel, you have a little animal and a big yellow cup. Would you like to put the animal in your cup?" After a toy is inside a cup, draw attention to its new and partially hidden location. Example: Use a slightly dramatic tone as you ask "Where did it go?" Peek into the cup and say "There it is!"

Demonstrate placing a cup over a toy (so the cup opening is on the floor) and then removing the cup. Depending on the transparency of the cup, the toy may be partially hidden. Use a slightly dramatic tone again to ask "Where did my little toy go?" and then announce "Here it is! My toy is under my big cup!" when you remove the cup. Encourage infants to put their cup over their toy and then remove it. Describe their actions.

Help infants exchange toys, if this seems to be of interest, and repeat the actions. There also may be interest in exchanging cups if they are different colors or sizes.

What to Look For—Option 1

The activity option offers opportunities for infants to use familiar items in interesting ways. Remember that your facial expressions and hand gestures are central to effective communications. Infants will not understand many of your words. Offer demonstrations slowly and in full view of infants so they can

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

easily follow along. Watch their gaze to ensure your words and actions are aligned with their attention. Although the activity is intended as guided play, there may be things infants want to do with a cup and toy that differ from the suggested actions. Be flexible about and supportive of their approaches to object inquiry.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Pause when you ask "Where did it go?" so an infant can point to or verbalize the location of your toy and/or an infant's toy. Infants enjoy and benefit from showing a "hidden" item.

Enrichment ■ Move your cup 6–12 inches on the floor (without lifting it) while a toy is under it. Describe that you are moving the cup. When it reaches its new nearby location, use hand gestures and words to ask infants if the little toy is still under the cup. ■ If infants exchange toys, invite them to place their toy in another infant's cup.

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BLOCK 16

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object Inquiry skills
Problem-solving
An older infant engages in open-ended play with toys initially lined up on the edge of a table.

Key Concepts
Drop
Carry

Materials Needed
5–6 small toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit or stand without support. Select toys you anticipate the infant would like to look at and manipulate, such as chubby vehicles and farm animals. The toys do not need to represent a theme. Line up the toys on the edge of a table the infant can easily stand at. Use a lower table if the infant will sit at a table.

Invite an infant to join you in playing with some toys. Sit or kneel next to the infant. Name and describe each toy, one at a time. Pay close attention to the infant's gaze so you can emphasize what seems to be the focus of the infant's attention.

Give time for the infant to think about using the toys in ways he/she wishes. The infant may initiate an activity of dropping the toys to the floor. Helping and watching the toys fall to the floor is meaningful and appropriate at this age. Encourage the infant to pick up the toys and return them to the table. The infant also may initiate an activity of carrying one or more toys to a different place in the room. Carrying toys from one place to another, sometimes without an obvious purpose, is also meaningful and appropriate at this age. There are important considerations for the infant regarding how to carry toys (one or two hands?), how many can be moved at one time, and what to do with the toy(s) at the new location.

Become a partner in the infant's activity if it seems the infant would like you to join him/her. Another option is to stay close and offer comments that let the infant know you are tuned in. Whatever approach you pursue, describe the infant's actions with the toys. Examples: "Sean, you are dropping the toys on the floor one by one." "Sammy, you're using both of your hands to carry a truck and a car to another table. Moving things is a big job!" Repeat and expand upon the infant's vocalizations.

What to Look For—Option 2

Infants may differ in the amount of time they devote to solving the initial problem of what to do with the toys lined up on the edge of a table. For some infants, the toy placement is an instant invitation to knock the toys to the floor. This is a developmentally appropriate activity, as noted in the activity description. For other infants, the toys may be seen as transport opportunities. Carrying objects from one place to another is a fun activity for many infants and can pose some challenges, as noted in the activity description. Look for opportunities to describe the infant's efforts without directing the play.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ An infant who is relatively new to standing may need your occasional support. It may work best to start the activity with the infant sitting at a table if he/she is willing.

Enrichment ■ Provide toys of different sizes so the infant can practice adapting his/her reach and grasp to accommodate the shape and size of the toys. ■ Cover one of the toys with a washcloth and observe the infant's reaction when he/she removes it.

Interest Area

Materials needed: scarf, stacking cups, muffin pan and six small toys, *Baby Faces Peekaboo!* by DK Publishing, and *Where's Spot?* by Eric Hill

Create simple yet interesting arrangements of playthings on the floor for non-mobile infants to see, such as a small scarf inside a stacking cup. Build a tower with 2–3 stacking cups. Encourage early mobile infants to touch the tower and watch it fall apart.

Provide a muffin pan and six small toys for older infants to use for in and out actions. The suggested books are enjoyable for infants at this age. Supervised use of books with flaps or movable tabs is important because infants do not understand that if a book flap is ripped off, a peek-a-boo type book loses its special appeal.

Family Child Care

Materials needed: craft sticks, paint, glue, paper plate, items to paint with (such as corks, berry baskets, cups, and small blocks)

The activity options in this block promote infants' use of familiar toys in interesting ways. Provide complementary opportunities for older children in your setting. Toddlers enjoy using dot painters to make marks on a paper plate. Preschool-age and school-age children may enjoy painting craft sticks and arranging them in a pleasing order when dry. Children can create a design and attach it to cardboard with school glue. Preschool-age and older children will be pleased to experiment with paint and a variety of items for printing, such as corks, berry baskets, cups, and small blocks.

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BLOCK 16

Paying Attention

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration
A young infant practices focusing on a caregiver's hand-clapping actions.

Key Concepts
Hands

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the words and tune of "Clap, Clap, Clap Your Hands."

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back. Ensure the infant can clearly see you. Smile and make eye contact with the infant.*]

EXPLAIN: These are my hands.

[*Wave hands gently in front of the infant. Then gently touch the infant's hands.*]

These are your hands!

I am going to move my hands and sing a song!

ACT: [*Begin clapping softly and singing the first verse of "Clap, Clap, Clap Your Hands." Exaggerate the clapping motion of your hands while maintaining a soft clapping sound.*

Describe the infant's reactions, especially visual attention to your actions. Example: "You are looking at my hands! You watched me clap my hands together. Would you like me to sing more?"

If the infant remains engaged, sing a second verse of the song using the following words and actions: "Pat, pat, pat your knees. Pat your knees, together."

Exaggerate the patting motion while maintaining a soft patting sound. Describe the infant's responses.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you describe what happened. Example: "You watched me clap my hands. You smiled and kicked your feet. We had fun together."*]

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BLOCK 16

Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration
An older infant practices focusing on a caregiver's hand-clapping actions with the opportunity to also clap hands.

Key Concepts
Watch
Hands

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the words and tune of "Clap, Clap, Clap Your Hands."

Invite an infant who can sit independently or with support to join you in doing fun things with our hands. Sit facing the infant with a smile. Point to and name your hands and then demonstrate several gentle claps. Example: "These are my hands. I am going to clap my hands during a song, like this." Ensure the infant is ready for the activity by watching for eye contact or the infant's gaze at your clapping hands. Acknowledge the infant's attention.

Sing the first verse of the song, "Clap, Clap, Clap Your Hands," while softly clapping your hands. Invite the infant to also clap his/her hands. After one verse of the song and clapping, describe the infant's responses. Example: "You watched me clap my hands. You clapped your hands too! You kicked your legs. Would you like me to sing more?"

If the infant remains interested, sing a second verse of the song using the following words and actions: "Pat, pat, pat your knees. Pat your knees together."

Conclude the activity by recognizing the infant's focus during the activity. Example: "You watched me clap my hands. You smiled and clapped your hands, too! It was fun to clap together!"

What to Look For—Options 1–2

The suggestion that you clap softly is intended to avoid startling or overstimulating the infant. But watch the infant's reactions carefully to determine whether a slightly louder clapping action might be enjoyed by the infant or help sustain the infant's attention. The length and type of participation will vary across infants. Some infants will lose interest much sooner than others. It is not necessary or appropriate to coax an infant to pay attention. Focusing on hands (the activity goal) does not mean the infant should clap in a particular way in Option 2. Most young infants are discovering their own hands and older infants typically want to explore clapping their hands together.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Offer a slower, quieter approach to the clapping and the song if you anticipate an infant may become overly excited during the activity. Also, you may wish to end the activity with a verse about "resting" hands by placing them in your lap.

Enrichment ■ Vary the speed of the song and corresponding hand movements.

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Paying Attention *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: none

Invite one or several infants to participate in clapping activities. Clap your hands to different rhymes or simple songs. Encourage older infants to clap their hands with you. Young infants may enjoy watching or having you gently clap their hands during the activities.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

Offer songs and finger plays to older toddlers and preschool-age children. Possibilities include "The Itsy-Bitsy Spider" and "If You're Happy and You Know It." Older children may enjoy leading others. Ensure infants are in a position to observe their peers.

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BLOCK 16

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver during a story of a mama bear and baby bear.

Key Concepts
Book
Bear
Love

Materials Needed
I Love You to the Moon and Back by Tim Warnes

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

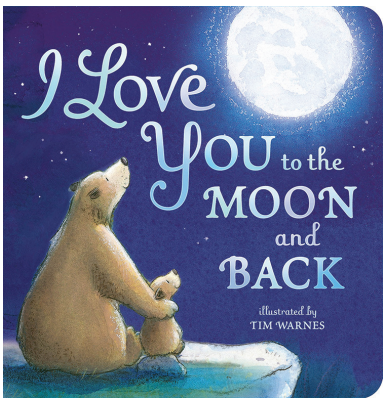
BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant securely and comfortably reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

Smile and talk with the infant about his/her most recent activity. Example: "Hello, Asha! You woke up and had your bottle. Now we can look at a book together."]

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

I have a book for us to read together! Here is a picture of a mama bear and a baby bear.

[*Pause for and acknowledge the infant's responses.*



Approach the book sharing as a conversation between you and the infant about pictures in the book. The infant's contributions to the conversation may be mostly non-verbal, especially facial expressions. Describe the infant's reactions. Use your own words to describe pictures. Point to what you describe because the infant is unlikely to understand most words you use. Point to the mother and baby on each page. Emphasize how much the mama bear loves her baby as they do special things together.

Pause frequently so the infant can begin to understand some of the rhythm of a conversation. Vary your voice to add interest.

Near the end of the book, you may wish to gently snuggle the infant as your read the corresponding words.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of what happened during the activity. Example: "We talked about pictures of a mama bear and her baby bear. The mama bear loved her baby very much! The mama snuggled her baby close. Then I snuggled you close, Asha! You smiled when I snuggled you close. We like to spend time together. Thank you for sharing time with me."*]

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant participates in nurturing interactions with a caregiver during a song.

Key Concepts
Song

Love

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Become familiar with the words and tune of "Skidamarink." Of the many hand motions included in the song, the activity described below uses only the actions for the phrase "I love you!"

Invite an infant who can sit independently or with support to join you for a special song. Sit across from the infant. Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you softly sing the words of the song. When you do motions for the phrase "I love you," gently tap the infant's nose when you sing the word "you."

Acknowledge and describe the infant's reactions to the song. Example: "You are smiling and leaning your body close to mine. I think you like hearing this special song. Would you like me to sing it again?" If the infant seems to be enjoying the one-to-one time with you, you may sing the song a second time. Offer a gentle hug at the conclusion of the activity.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant participates in nurturing interactions with a caregiver while playing with a baby doll.

Key Concepts
Play
Doll
Like

Materials Needed
Baby doll

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to join you to play with a baby doll. Hug the doll and then give it to the infant. Suggest the infant hug the doll, too. Example: "Here is a baby doll for you to play with. Our baby doll likes hugs! Would you like to hug the doll baby?"

Describe the infant's actions with the doll, especially actions related to nurturance. Examples: "You are smiling at the baby, Sophie. People like smiles!" "You are holding the baby doll gently. People like gentle touches."

Offer to participate in nurturing actions shown by the infant. Examples: "You are hugging the baby, Noah. Would you like me to give you a hug?" "The doll baby is sitting on your lap. Would you like to sit on my lap?"

Acknowledge any signs of wanting to connect with you. Example: "Thank you for the hug, Sophia! I like your hugs."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Be attentive to an infant's interest in holding your hand, climbing on your lap, getting a big smile from you, or moving closer to you. Also be sensitive to differences across infants in the amount of preferred physical contact with you. One infant may enjoy being hugged and held often, whereas another infant may prefer a light touch on the shoulder, a pat on the back, or your words only.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Smile and use the infant's name frequently.

Enrichment ■ Provide a teddy bear or other soft toy animal for the infant to hold in Option 1.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several baby dolls, doll accessories (such as bottles and blankets), assortment of stuffed animals

Provide opportunities for infants to play with baby dolls and soft toy animals. Encourage caring behaviors as the infants interact with the dolls and animals. Sit near the infants so you can carefully watch for and respond to their requests for attention or closeness. Work hard to avoid other distractions so you can respond warmly and positively when an infant approaches you for interaction. Example: brings a toy to show you.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

Children of all ages will enjoy the song and actions offered in Option 2. Encourage older children to sing and do the motions with you. Toddlers may enjoy singing some of the repeated phrases as well as the motions for the words "I love you." Infants will enjoy listening to and watching their peers.

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BLOCK 16

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

Infants practice coordinating the use of their hands to play with toy musical instruments.

Key Concepts
Hands

Materials Needed
Infant-size pianos and drums—1 per infant

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Cognitive

Sit close to several infants who can sit with or without support. Say the name of each instrument as you point to or hold it. Explain that we can make sounds with our toys. Demonstrate how to use two hands to make a sound with each item, one toy at a time. Emphasize that you are using both hands. Hold up both hands as you describe them. Example: "These are my hands. I am using both of my hands to tap our drum. Tap, tap, tap. The drum is making a sound."

Use both of your hands to offer one instrument to each infant. Offer an instrument in a way that encourages the infant to use both hands to take the instrument from you. Refrain from simply putting a toy in front of an infant. Then encourage each infant to use both of his/her hands to make a sound with the instrument.

Describe each infant's actions with a toy. Point out that the toy makes a sound when we gently hit our hand or a finger on part of the toy. Help infants trade toys if interested and encourage continued use of both hands to make sounds. Conclude the activity by reminding infants that we used our hands to make sounds.

What to Look For—Option 1

Larger toy instruments are recommended for this activity because they promote the use of both hands for holding or moving, including taking the toy from you as suggested in the activity plan. The sound-making toys will be of interest to most infants. Using both hands to make a sound may be novel for some infants. Offer your initial demonstration of using both hands with a toy when infants are focused on you. Consider offering another demonstration if an infant uses one hand exclusively. It is not necessary to use both hands to make a sound with an instrument, of course, and infants will differ in their readiness to coordinate the use of both hands. Look for opportunities to emphasize the cause-effect nature of playing with the instrument. Example: "Wow, Samantha. You used your hands to push keys on our piano. And the piano made a sound!" Acknowledge each infant's approach to the instruments.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Make sure an instrument is close to an infant. Some infants may prefer to sit with the toy piano on his/her lap.

Enrichment ■ Alternate the use of your hands in tapping the drum or piano keys. First one hand (or finger), then the other hand (or finger). The intent is to demonstrate an alternative to tapping the instrument with both hands at the same time. ■ Make up a simple song to accompany each infant's sound-making efforts. Example: To the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," sing "Arianna is tapping her drum, tapping her drum, tapping her drum. Ariana is tapping her drum, all morning long."

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BLOCK 16

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An older infant practices turning pages of a board book.

Key Concepts
Book

Turn

Page

Materials Needed
Board book of interest to infant (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Social-Emotional

Cognitive

Optional Reading
Noisy Farm by Tiger Tales

Puppies and Kittens (Baby Touch and Feel) by DK Publishing

I Am a Dump Truck by Happy Books

Beep! Beep! (Baby Touch and Feel) by DK Publishing

Revised: 6/30/2023

Be Prepared: This activity is for an older infant who shows beginning interest in and ability to turn the pages of a book, such as using his/her thumb and index (pointer) finger to pick up small items or poking an index finger into a toy or book that has holes. The activity described below offers focused support in learning how to turn the pages of a board book. It is an in-depth complement to ELM's book sharing activity plans for infants, which consistently suggest inviting an older infant to help turn the pages of a book.

Identify a book of interest to the infant from this activity's Optional Reading list or your classroom's library. The examples of engagement strategies offered in this activity plan are from *Noisy Farm* by Tiger Tales.

BEGIN: [*Sit next to an infant and invite him/her to look at the book with you.*]

EXPLAIN: We can look at this book together.

[*Point to and describe key features of the book's cover. Example: "Our book is about farm animals. Here is a cow. Cows are animals. Cows live on farms. Look at the cow's big ears. Here is the cow's mouth. The cow says "moo."*]

We need to turn the page of our book to find out what else happens. I am going to turn the page of our book to see what happens next.

ACT: [*Slowly demonstrate turning the first page, lifting with your index finger as you describe your action.*]

I used my finger to turn a page of our book. You have a finger, too. Where is your finger?

[*Encourage the infant to hold up his/her finger.*

Read part or all of the text on the page. Point to and describe any illustrations on the page that correspond to the text. Example: "Here is a lamb. Look at the picture of a lamb jumping!"]

I used my finger to point to the lion shown in our book. You can use your finger to point to something in our book.

[*Invite the infant to point to an image on a page. Example: "There is another animal on this page. Would you please point to the other animal?" Emphasize that the infant used his/her finger to point. Example: "You used your finger to point. You pointed to a picture of a horse."*]

We need to turn a page of our book so we can find out what happens. Would you please turn a page for us?

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

[*Encourage the infant to use his/her index finger to lift the page. Describe the infant's action in turning a page. Continue this pattern of reading the book, inviting the infant to turn pages, and describing how we use our finger to turn a page.*]

RECAP: We shared a book together. You turned the pages of the book so we could find out what happens next in our book. Thank you for helping us look at our book!

[*Encourage the infant to gently return the book to its customary location. Emphasize that carrying the book with both hands and gently putting it in its location are part of taking good care of our books.*]

What to Look For—Option 2

Regular reminders of when to turn a page are helpful prompts. Describing how we use our finger to turn a page can also be helpful. Infants benefit from hearing important words used repeatedly. The point in which you offer these reminders in the session may change as the infant becomes more familiar with the process. The first several times the infant is invited to turn a page, it may be useful to describe how we use a finger. After several instances of turning a page, the description of finger use can be offered after the infant turns a page. Watch the infant's page-turning attempts to determine when your mention of using a finger can be offered after (vs. before) the infant's page turn. Note the activity description also recommends offering a periodic reminder of why we turn a page.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ If appropriate, consider using a book with tabs that make it easier to turn a page. ■ Provide just enough assistance for the infant to be successful in turning a page. ■ If necessary, explain that we turn pages gently. We do not turn pages real fast. We are gentle with our books.

Enrichment ■ If appropriate, consider using a book with regular book paper (not a board book). ■ Instead of placing the book between you and the infant, invite the child to put the book in his/her lap. Maintain close proximity so you can easily offer guidance and comments.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: texture mat, touch-and-feel texture books (such as *Beep! Beep!* by DK Publishing, *Puppies and Kittens* by DK Publishing, and *Noisy Farm* by Tiger Tales), shape sorter, pop-up boxes, an Oball® toy

Non-mobile infants enjoy feeling textures with their fingers. Place the texture mat in an area free of other toys. Some infants may like to roll over the mat. Young infants will also enjoy looking at picture books arranged on the floor. Sit close to a non-mobile infant to turn pages and describe pictures.

Items that early mobile infants can put into containers, and then dump out, can foster fine motor skills. Display books in novel places for infants to discover. Sit with 1–2 infants at a time to look at picture books with textures. The books suggested above have texture and pictures that will interest most infants. Example: *Noisy Farm* has buttons that activate animal sounds. Some infants may activate the sound buttons in *Noisy Farm* with one finger. Younger infants can press the button using their whole hand.

In selecting play materials for a week, consider toys that foster the fine motor skills of mobile infants who are exploring the use of thumb and index finger together. Possibilities include a shape sorter, pop-up boxes, and the Oball® toy.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: paper, stapler, shoelaces, cardboard, maze puzzles, thin marker, sound makers, and musical instruments that promote use of both hands

In addition to offering the activity options for infants, offer ways to promote the fine motor skills of older children in your setting. Encourage preschool-age children to draw in a homemade blank book. (Fold three sheets of copy paper in half and staple at the fold. Make the blank books ahead of time and give one to each preschool child.) Show children how to open their book and press their hand along the fold to create pages that will open easily.

Lacing cards also fosters the fine motor skills of preschool-age and older children. Homemade lacing materials can be made with shoelaces and cardboard. Older children may enjoy solving maze puzzles while practicing a pencil grip on a thin marker.

For an informal gathering with a mixed-age group, give each child sound makers for each hand or instruments that require both hands, such as a tambourine. Ask older children to help you sing familiar songs. Encourage all children to use the instruments to make pleasing sounds together.

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BLOCK 17 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes pictures of baby fingers and toes.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of baby fingers and toes.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help manage the book and communicate about pictures of baby fingers and toes.

Cognitive

Solving Problems

Option 1 (OO) An infant participates in taking apart a stacking rings toy.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant participates in taking apart a stacking rings toy and placing the rings in a clear container.

Self-Regulation

Getting Calm

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity with a bell.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity with a bell.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates with a caregiver in responsive interactions focused on nesting cups.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver while playing with nesting cups.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in back-and-forth exchanges with a caregiver while playing with nesting cups.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (IG) Young infants participate in guided play focused on pre-crawling skills.

Option 2 (OO) An infant practices crawling in a special crawling zone that includes an opportunity to crawl under a small bridge.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants practice crawling as part of pretending to be little kittens.

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

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BLOCK 17

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes pictures of baby fingers and toes.

Key Concepts
Book
Fingers
Toes

Materials Needed
Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes by Mem Fox

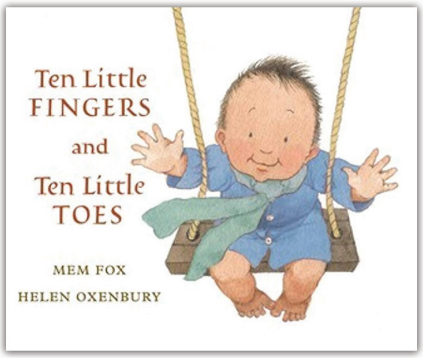
Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.]*

Hold the book about 12 inches from the infant and point to the picture on the cover. Point to hands, fingers, feet, and toes when you name each.]

EXPLAIN: I have a book for us to read together! Here is a picture of a baby.

This is a happy baby. The baby is smiling. Here are the baby's hands. The baby has lots of fingers! Here are the baby's feet. See the baby's toes? Here are the toes!



Our book has pictures of baby fingers and baby toes. Let's open the book and look at the pictures of babies!

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

- *Use your own words to describe pictures. Point to parts of pictures that you describe. Example: "The babies are swinging. The babies are smiling big. They look happy! You smile big when you swing!"*
- *Spend more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "Look at the baby's chickens! One, two, three chickens. Here are fingers and toes." (Point to each.)*
- *Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are kicking your legs and looking at the pictures of the babies swinging."*
- *Use your voice to add interest. The infant may enjoy variation in your voice, such as an occasional slightly higher pitch and slower tempo.*]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We looked at pictures of different babies. You kicked your legs when you looked at the pictures of the babies swinging! We pointed to fingers and toes. Thank you for sharing this book with me!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

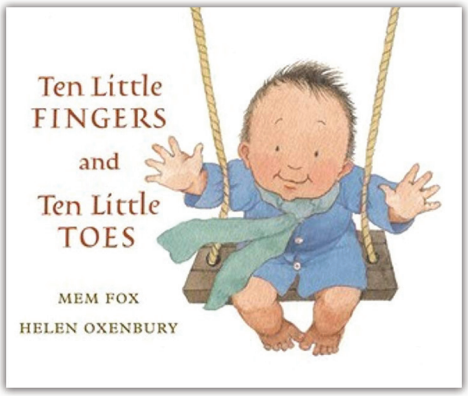
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the book's pages and communicate about pictures of baby fingers and toes.

Key Concepts
Book
Fingers
Toes

Materials Needed
Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes by Mem Fox

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and parts of the cover picture you name. Example: "Do you see the baby? The baby is smiling! Here are the baby's fingers. Here are the baby's toes! Our book shows pictures of baby fingers and baby toes!"



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

- Invite the infant to help you turn pages of the book.
- Use your own words to describe pictures. Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the babies laughing in their beds. The babies are having fun together. Can you find the babies' toes? Let's point to them!"
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are touching your toes! You are looking at pictures of the babies' toes. You found your toes! You have toes just like the babies in our book."
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and understandings. Example: "This picture shows many fingers! We have fingers. Where are your fingers? Do your fingers look like the fingers shown in our book? Where are my fingers?"
- Use your voice to add interest. Emphasize the repeated phrase "ten little fingers and ten little toes."
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book sharing. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Elijah. You looked at the pictures of the babies. We pointed to the babies' fingers and toes. You found your toes! You have fingers and toes just like the babies in our book."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help manage the book and communicate about pictures of baby fingers and toes.

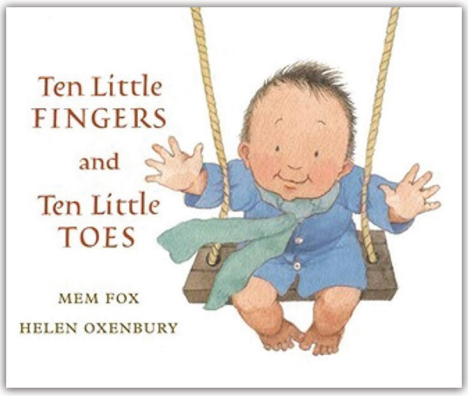
Key Concepts
Book
Fingers
Toes

Materials Needed
Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes by Mem Fox

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to help you hold the book and turn its pages. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.

Once the infant is comfortable and ready to read, point to the picture on the book cover and to parts of the picture you describe. Example: "Do you see the smiling baby? Look at the baby's hands. The baby has ten little fingers! Look at the baby's feet. The baby has ten little toes! Our book is about baby fingers and baby toes." Use the following strategies to share the book:



- Invite the infant to help you hold the book and turn its pages. You may wish to keep all the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. Follow the infant's preferences for how quickly or slowly to turn the pages. The infant may turn pages forward and backward, and return to a favorite page several times.
- Use your own words to describe pictures. Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "This baby lives on ice. Look at the penguin! This baby lives in a tent. Do you see the chickens? Both of these babies have fingers and toes!"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you name. Example: "Look at the baby swinging! I see little toes. Where are the baby's toes?"
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'kiss!' The mommy is kissing her little baby on his nose."
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and understandings. Example: "The baby is looking at his fingers. Here are the baby's fingers. Where are your fingers? You have fingers just like the baby in our book!"
- Show enjoyment as you read the rhythmic, rhyming, repetitive text. Emphasize the repeated phrase "ten little fingers and ten little toes."
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped hold our book, Abigail. You turned the pages to look at the pictures. You said 'kiss' when you looked at the picture of the mommy giving her baby a kiss. You pointed to the baby's toes. Then you found your toes! Thank you for sharing this book with me!"

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

The focus on fingers and toes in this book will appeal to many infants, especially infants who are becoming familiar with their own fingers and toes. The larger size and thick, chunky pages of this book make it especially helpful for an infant's developing skills in how to handle a book (Options 2 and 3). You may wish to connect the book's focus on fingers to the infant's use of his/her finger in turning a book's pages. If appropriate, incorporate some of the information and suggested experiences offered in Block 16, Physical/Health, Option 2.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Infants may enjoy holding a baby doll with exposed fingers and toes during or after the book sharing. Point to the fingers and toes in the pictures, and help the infant find the same parts on the baby doll.

Enrichment ■ After the book sharing, remove the infant's shoes and socks and help him/her explore his/her own toes.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes* by Mem Fox

Share the book along with finger plays (such as "Where is Thumbkin") and games that involve toes (such as *This Little Piggy*). Remember to touch the infant gently and to avoid tickling or pulling on fingers or toes. Some infants may enjoy repeating finger plays and games.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: books with illustrated finger plays (optional)

Children of all ages enjoy finger plays. Encourage toddlers and older children to demonstrate the actions of simple, familiar finger plays. Infants will enjoy being held and observing the actions of their older peers.

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BLOCK 17

Solving Problems

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

An infant participates in taking apart a stacking rings toy.

Key Concepts
Rings

Off

Materials Needed
Stacking rings toy

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently or with support. Begin the activity with a stacking rings toy that is fully assembled (all rings on the spool).

Invite the infant to join you in playing with a stacking rings toy. Place the fully-assembled toy close enough for the infant to see. Point to the stack of rings and use a cheerful tone of voice to describe them. Example: "Ellie, these are our stacking rings. There are lots of pretty colors." Pause to let the infant look.

Take one ring off the spool and show it to the infant. If the ring has little beads inside, shake it softly. Hold the ring steady so the infant can focus his/her eyes on the object. Remove the next ring and hold it for the infant to see. Continue to take rings off the spool slowly. Show each ring to the infant as long as he/she shows interest. Each time you remove a ring, point to and tell how the toy looks different.

Support different forms of participation in the activity, including the following:

- The infant may mostly or exclusively watch you take apart the toy. Provide opportunities for the infant to look at the rings you remove. Draw attention to how the toy changes each time a ring is removed.
- The infant may opt to touch or manipulate a ring(s). If the infant reaches for the ring, move it toward his/her hand. Some infants may grasp the ring. Other infants may swipe at the ring without grasping it. If an infant cannot grasp the ring, move the ring so he/she can feel the ring's surface.
- The infant may help you remove rings from the spool, or work independently to remove rings. An infant who is familiar with a stacking rings toy may start removing rings as soon as you present the toy. Other infants may benefit from your invitations to remove a ring and your demonstrating how to take a ring off the spool.

Describe the infant's actions. Example: "Angel, you took the ring off with two hands." Draw attention to characteristics of a ring, such as color or texture, while following the infant's pace and interest.

The infant may welcome a brief break from looking at your actions or removing rings. Both tasks can be tiring for an infant. End the activity if the infant turns away, looks away, or gets fussy.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

What to Look For—Option 1

Watch the infant's gaze and hand/arm movements to determine how he/she may wish to participate. Infants will differ in their approach to the activity, as described in the activity plan. Some may focus more on the rings than on how the toy is changing each time a ring is removed. There are cognitive benefits in the coordination of hands and eyes if the infant manipulates or helps remove a ring. An infant may use two hands to remove a ring. There is not a preferred method for this activity. An infant may want to keep holding a ring. Holding or manipulating a ring is not necessary for an infant to benefit from the activity. Watching is a valuable form of participation and a good way to explore an object.

If the infant grasps a ring, talk about and point to the ring's color and texture, including whether it has a rippled surface. Infants at this age are beginning to distinguish bold colors. It is common for parents and other caregivers to talk about colors, even though most infants learn colors and color names at about 24-36 months of age.

Look carefully at whether the toy seems to be at a proper distance from the infant. Typically, very young infants can visually focus at about 12 inches. Decide how much distance is best for the infant by observing the infant's reaction to the colorful toy. An older infant may prefer the ring placed up to 20 inches out.

Avoid beginning the activity with rings that need to be placed on the spool. This distracts from, and potentially confuses, the goal of helping the infant see how an item can be taken apart. Assembling a stacking rings toy is far more advanced than taking apart the toy.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Move the stacking rings toy closer to the infant if he/she does not initially seem to visually focus on the toy. ■ Pause after removing each ring so there is time for the infant to look at the ring and what is happening to the toy. ■ If the infant removes a ring but seems reluctant to remove another, point to the next ring to be removed and ask if he/she wants take it off.

Enrichment ■ Acknowledge an infant's accomplishment in removing a ring. Example: "Wow, Angel! The ring was on the toy, and you got it off." ■ If an infant wants to play some more, put the rings back on the spool and support the infant in removing the rings independently.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

☑

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving
An older infant participates in taking apart a stacking rings toy and placing the rings in a clear container.

Key Concepts
Off
Into
More

Materials Needed
1 stacking rings toy
1 clear, round container

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

BEGIN: [*Invite an infant to play a game with the stacking rings. Sit on the floor facing the infant and present the toy with the rings stacked on the spool. Place the clear container near the infant. Point to the rings and to the container (bowl) when you describe each.*]

EXPLAIN: We can play a game by taking the rings off the spool. Then we put the rings into a bowl.

[*Emphasize by repeating "rings off" and "into a bowl."*]

ASK: Would you like to take off the first ring?

[*Point to the top ring.*]

ACT: [*Describe the infant's actions as he/she removes the ring.*

Encourage the infant to drop the first ring into the bowl.

Act as the announcer in the game. Example: "Diego, you took one ring off and put it in the bowl! You did it all by yourself."

Add your own fun twist to make the activity appealing for the infant. Example: Clap and say "ta-da" each time the infant drops a ring into the container.]

Are you ready to get more rings?

[*Emphasize more.*

Point to and describe the next ring.]

Next is the orange ring!

[*Continue to encourage the two-step activity. If the infant removes most or all of the rings, emphasize the differences between the (empty) spool and the many rings in the bowl.*

Give the bowl to the infant and encourage him/her to dump the rings onto the floor. The infant can observe the random arrangement of the rings on the floor, which looks different from the rings stacked in order by size. Emphasize the infant's action changed the arrangement of rings. Example: "Makayla, your rings were stacked up inside the bowl. Now they are in different places on the floor."]

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

RECAP: [*Briefly describe the infant's actions with the rings and bowl, including his/her reaction to taking the stacking rings toy apart. Example: "You took the rings off the spool. Then you put the rings in the bowl. Now the rings are spread out on the floor! You changed how things look!"*]

What to Look For—Option 2

Two collections are taken apart in this activity. One is the set of rings on a spool. The other is the set of rings in the clear container. This offers two opportunities for the infant to see results of his/her actions. Emphasize each change but avoid a strong teaching approach. Infants can learn a lot by acting on items and seeing for themselves how items can change.

It is all right to use the color names in describing rings, but do not attempt to teach color. Infants do not learn color names at this age, but they are able to detect color differences.

Some infants will notice how the rings in the clear bowl are arranged in order, from small to large. However, putting the toy back together requires awareness of subtle differences in size and an understanding of how to order objects from small to large. Also, the spool is wider at the bottom. At this age, most infants will not have achieved this understanding.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Hold the container and move it closer to the infant as he/she begins to remove rings. ■ Point to the container as it fills and comment on the number of rings. Example: "There are lots of rings in our bowl." At the same time, point to and comment on how the spool is getting empty.

Enrichment ■ Stack the rings on the floor in order by size and encourage the infant to knock them over. ■ If an infant remains interested in the activity, stack the rings back onto the spool so the infant may repeat the game. ■ If an infant shows interest in putting the toy together, give him/her the rings one at a time, starting with the largest. Most infants need explicit support for putting together a stacking rings toy.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: stacking rings toy, infant gym, nesting cups, empty tissue box

Place one large and one small ring on the floor in front of an infant at tummy time. Arrange the rings so an infant who is reaching can grasp them. Suspend two rings from the infant gym so a nonmobile infant can see the rings move and can swipe at them.

Create a simple arrangement of rings on a surface that early mobile infants can discover. Set up a stack of nesting cups an infant can tip over. Provide an empty tissue box so an infant can put the stacking rings inside and easily remove them.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: infant snap-link beads, nonbreakable clear container, large peg puzzles, magnetic builders, or other manipulative construction sets

Infants' work in taking apart a toy can be extended to older children in your setting. The suggested materials can be taken apart by toddlers and preschool-age children. Put together several lengths of infant snap-link beads. Provide a nonbreakable clear container for the beads.

Provide large peg puzzles for toddlers. Some toddlers will simply remove the puzzle pieces. Some toddlers will begin to put a peg puzzle together.

Preschool-age and older children will enjoy constructing with magnetic builders or other manipulative construction sets at a table.

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BLOCK 17

Getting Calm

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control
A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity with a bell.

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
1 caged bell

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who are not mobile.

BEGIN: [*Hold the infant with his/her head well supported in the bend of your arm. Smile, make eye contact, and hold up the bell for the infant to see and touch.*]

I have a new toy. Would you like to play with it?

[*Pause and acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at the toy. I will move the bell closer so you can touch it."*]

ACT: [*Hold the bell so the infant can easily reach it. The infant may show interest by watching, making arm movements in the direction of the bell, and/or reaching out and grasping it. If the infant appears to be enjoying the bell, support the infant in exploring the bell's shape, feel, and/or sound.*

Watch the infant's reactions closely to determine whether the infant might like you to move or shake the bell or the infant prefers to hold or manipulate the bell. Gently take away the bell if the infant seems disinterested or distressed at any time.

Describe your actions with the bell and the infant's actions and reactions. Example: "You are smiling so big when you move the bell back and forth! You are listening to the sound the bell makes when it moves."

After several minutes of the infant exploring the bell, put it away and tell the infant it is time for us to calm down. Example: "We are putting the bell away. All done. We can calm down now." Reposition the infant to provide a clear signal that play time with the bell is over. Hold the infant and provide comfort, such as patting on the back, quietly singing a familiar song, or offering soft-voice reminders that it is time to rest.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you describe time with the bell. Example: "We had fun with a bell! You told me with your big smile that you liked to hold the bell and listen to the sounds it makes. Then we put the bell away. I held you while you got calm again."*]

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity with a bell.

Key Concepts
Ring
Calm

Materials Needed
2 caged bells

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Cognitive

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who can sit independently or with support.

Invite an infant to sit across from you on the floor to play with a bell. Introduce the bell and invite the infant to touch and hold the bell. Describe what the infant does with the bell. Encourage the infant to ring the bell. Then invite the infant to ring his/her bell while you ring your bell and sing a song. Sing the following song with an enthusiastic voice. Smile widely while you ring your bell. Encourage the infant to ring his/her bell, too. (Tune: "Row, Row, Row, Your Boat")

Ring, ring, ring your bell,
Ring it up and down.
Ring it loud, ring it soft,
Ring it to the ground.

Sing the song and ring your bell a second time if the infant seems to enjoy the activity. Encourage the infant to ring his/her bell, too.

After one or two rounds of the song, describe the infant's reaction to the bell. Example: "You had fun ringing a bell, Sydney. You smiled and rang your bell while I sang a song. I rang my bell, too!"

Then softly announce that ringing the bell is done. We are putting away our bells. Encourage the infant to sit and rest with you. The infant may want to sit near you or on your lap. Provide quiet time for the infant to become calm. The infant may benefit from your patting his/her back and/or quietly humming a favorite song.

Conclude the session by acknowledging the infant's efforts to become calm. Example: "We put away our bells. You are sitting next to me. We are getting calm."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Some infants will focus on holding the bell and examining its shape and feel with their hands and mouth. Others may enjoy waving the bell around and listening to the sounds. And some infants may prefer to watch you move and ring the bell. Each of these possibilities can be mildly stimulating for the infant and set the stage for practicing how to calm down. Watch the infant closely to make sure the bell ringing is appropriately stimulating. Some infants do not like a loud bell sound but respond positively to a soft bell sound. You can add

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

or decrease stimulation through your motions with the bell, such as moving your hand only versus your arm, and through softer or louder rings and song.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Use your knowledge of an infant to determine whether a quieter, slower approach to the bell would be appropriately stimulating. ■ To calm down, a younger infant may appreciate your holding him/her in your arms and gently swaying.

Enrichment ■ Use your bell to imitate the infant's bell actions. ■ Make large, exaggerated movements with the second bell and encourage the infant to copy you. Acknowledge the infant's efforts. Example: "I am ringing my bell up high. You are ringing your bell up high! We are ringing the bells together.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: caged bells, blanket or mat, soft music

Place the bells on a blanket or mat on the floor for interested infants to explore. Play soft music and invite infants to play with the bells while they listen to the music. Mobile infants may crawl or walk to the interest area. Younger infants may indicate interest by watching, vocalizing, or reaching toward the bells. Provide support for each interested infant to participate. After the activity, encourage infants to sit quietly with you and become calm before moving to another activity.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: variety of age-appropriate musical instruments (including caged bells), soft music

Children of all ages enjoy making music with toy instruments. Give each child an instrument to play while listening to soft music. Alternatively, you may wish to sing a variety of songs with the children, such as the bell song in Option 2. Infants will enjoy holding their own bell to shake and ring. Before moving to the next activity, invite children to put down their instruments and sit quietly for a few moments. You may wish to softly recite a simple, familiar rhyme.

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BLOCK 17

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Be Prepared: Select two nesting cups of contrasting colors.

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates with a caregiver in responsive interactions focused on nesting cups.

Key Concepts
Cups

Materials Needed
2 nesting cups (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her tummy in front of you. Sit on the floor very close to the infant so he/she can see your face and hear your voice.*

Engage the infant with a big smile, eye contact, and a verbal welcome. Example: "Hello, Jacob! I am happy to see you today! Would you like to play with me?" Acknowledge the infant's reaction. Example: "I can hear you cooing, Sofia. You are talking to me. I think you would like to play!"]

ACT: [*Place the two cups about 12 inches from the infant with cup openings facing up.*]

Here are two cups we can play with! Maybe you would like to touch the cups.

[*Pause for the infant's response to the cups. If the infant does not reach for or touch a cup, move one of the cups closer to the infant. If the infant looks at but does not touch or grasp a cup, slowly show and describe some ways to play with the cups. Examples:*

- *Tap the cups gently together to make a soft noise.*
- *Place one cup inside the other cup. Then separate the cups by lifting the cup on top or turning over the nested cups so a cup falls out.*

After showing and describing some things to do with the cups, move the cups closer to the infant and wait for a reaction.

Describe what the infant does and what you do. Examples: "You are holding the blue cup, Joshua. You are feeling the cup with your mouth." "I am tapping the two cups together. Tap, tap, tap. Do you hear the tapping sound?"

Encourage the infant to pursue things that seem to be of interest. Examples: "You are looking at the cups and smiling. Would you like to hold a cup? Here, I will help you." "Your eyes got big when I tapped the two cups together. Would you like me to do it again?"

Offer brief pauses so the infant can respond and contribute. Respond to vocalizations by repeating and expanding the utterance.]

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of the interaction. Example: "Thank you for playing with me, Sofia. You held the blue cup. You listened to the sound of the cups tapping together. You smiled at me and I smiled at you! We had fun together!"*]

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BLOCK 17

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver while playing with nesting cups.

Key Concepts
Cups

Materials Needed
4 nesting cups (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently or with support. Select four nesting cups of different contrasting colors.

Invite an infant to sit on the floor with you to play with nesting cups. Sit across from one another. Place two cups in front of the infant and two cups in front of you. Each of the two sets of cups (yours and the infant's), should include one cup with its opening facing up and the other cup with its opening facing down. This arrangement emphasizes some key characteristics of the cups.

Wait for the infant to take the first action(s) with a cup(s). If the infant does not touch or reach for a cup after a moment, move one of the cups closer to the infant and encourage him to touch or hold it. If the infant continues to leave the cups alone, use your cups to show and describe one or several ways to play with the cups. Examples: Tapping the cups together to make a soft noise or putting one cup inside the other cup and then lifting and turning over the nested cups so one cup falls out. Pause for the infant to act with his/her cups.

If the infant continues to watch but not act with his/her cups, invite the infant to help you with one of your previously demonstrated actions with your cups. Examples: You and the infant could tap cups together (each one of you holding a cup) or you could put a cup inside a larger cup held by the infant and then encourage the infant to turn over the nested cups so the smaller cup falls to the floor.

The infant is likely to play with the cups you present to him/her. Support the infant's play in the following ways:

- Describe the infant's actions.
- Use your cups to mimic what the infant does. Draw attention to how you are doing what the infant is doing.
- Offer one or both of your cups to the infant. This could be an exchange for one or both of the infant's cups or the infant might like to play with all four cups.

Conclude the activity with a brief description of what happened. Emphasize interactions between you and the infant. Example: "We had fun playing with the cups today, Xavier! You tapped your cups together. Then I tapped my cups together! You laughed when I did what you did. Thank you for playing with me!"

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant participates in back-and-forth exchanges with a caregiver while playing with nesting cups.

Key Concepts
Cups

Stack

Materials Needed
4 nesting cups (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently. Put the largest four nesting cups together.

Invite the infant to sit across from you in an open floor space to play with nesting cups. Place the nested cups between you, with opening facing up. Initiate taking turns removing cups, one at a time, from the set of nested cups. First pick up the cup on top and place it on the floor with its opening down (opening is on the floor). Describe what you are doing. Next, invite the infant to do what you just did: pick up the next cup on the top of the nested cups and place it on the floor with its opening down. (It is okay if the infant does not put the opening face down; you can make this adjustment later.) Then you repeat this action with the third cup. Invite the infant to turn over the remaining fourth cup, so its opening is on the floor.

Next, invite the infant to work with you in stacking the four cups. Initiate this action by putting the largest cup in front of the infant (remaining face down) and then handing the infant the next largest cup to put on top of the largest cup. Offer verbal support to the infant, if needed, on where to put the cup. Avoid taking over the task. Continue this process until the smallest of the four cups is on the top of the stack. Then invite the infant to knock over the stack of cups. Offer an enthusiastic response. Example: "Wow, you knocked down the cups, Damien! We stacked the cups. Now the cups are on the floor!"

The infant is likely to want to repeat the stacking process and especially the knocking-over action. Conclude the session by emphasizing the shared actions. Example: "This was fun! We worked together to take apart the cups. Then we worked together to stack the cups. Then you knocked down our stack of cups! We both laughed! Thank you for playing with me!"

What to Look For—Options 1–3

The activity options continue the practice of using a toy to facilitate positive interactions between you and the infant. Look more at an infant's facial expressions than at his/her actions with a cup. What matters most in each activity is the interpersonal connection between you and the infant, not whether a cup is being used in a particular way. The back-and-forth exchanges suggested in Option 3 may not be fully realized (or realized at all) in some

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

situations. Infants cannot be expected to understand the concept of taking turns, but many will enjoy a supportive pattern of interactions with a caregiver.

Nesting cups are a favorite of infants and offer many different possibilities for manipulation. Infants are not expected to nest or stack the cups independently, but older infants will enjoy doing so with caregiver guidance as suggested in the Option 3 plan.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ In Option 1, hold the infant in your lap if it is too challenging for the infant to explore the cups while on his/her tummy. ■ In Option 3, if an infant becomes overly excited about knocking over the stack, demonstrate and describe gentle touches with the cups and use three rather than four cups if stacking is repeated.

Enrichment ■ In Option 1, add two people figures to the play after the infant has explored the cups. There are many ways the people figures could be explored by the infant, such as putting a figure in a cup or putting a figure on top of a cup with its opening on the floor.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of cups (including some nesting cups), assortment of small toys (such as balls or animals)

Be Prepared: Create an interesting arrangement of cups and toys for infants to discover. Example: Place some toys in cups, and place other toys on top of cups turned upside down.

Cups can be enjoyable, open-ended materials for infants to explore. Encourage infants to explore the cups and toys in their own ways. Some infants will enjoy placing toys in and out of the cups. Others may enjoy tapping two cups together. Describe infants' actions.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of cups (including some nesting cups), assortment of small toys (such as balls or animals), sensory or water table

Children of all ages enjoy playing with nesting cups. While an infant engages in one of the suggested activity options, an older child and a toddler could work together to nest and stack a set of cups. Young children will often place small toys in cups and then remove them. Cups can be placed in a sensory or water table to encourage scooping and pouring.

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BLOCK 17

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

Young infants participate in guided play focused on pre-crawling skills.

Key Concepts
Reach

Roll over

Materials Needed
2 soft rattles

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This activity is for two nonmobile infants. Tailor the activity to provide practice time for whatever motor skill each infant is learning. Some infants may be reaching for a toy, pushing up their head and chest, or rolling over. Some infants may be scooting forward, whereas others may be pulling their legs under their body to a balanced hands-and-knees position.

Place two nonmobile infants on a firm mat, or padded floor, when they are alert for play. Put the infants on their backs near one another. Devote some time to helping the infants get comfortable in the setting. Use your voice and big smiles to create interest in looking at you. The infants may respond to you with sounds, looking, or movement. Describe what the infants are doing.

Then shake two soft rattles, one at a time. Place one rattle near each infant. Put the rattle within an infant's range of sight to encourage head turning, reaching, or rolling over. Encourage the infants to hold or touch a rattle. Talk with each infant. Communicate enthusiasm for each infant's efforts or accomplishments. Remember the importance of your tone of voice, facial expressions, and gestures. After 1–2 minutes, reposition an infant if he/she has not turned over or moved. If an infant is uncomfortable, help by moving closer and/or picking up the infant.

The infants may begin to vocalize as they move their legs and arms. The infants may be happy to see one another. Positively acknowledge the infants' vocalizations, smiles, and nonverbal reactions. Example: "Devon, you turned your head when Isabel cooed. You heard Isabel make a sound."

What to Look For—Option 1

Infants spend time focused on an emerging physical skill until it is achieved. This play session provides a rattle, and your support, as tools for helping an infant learn skills that lead to crawling. Young infants are learning to control body movements in the months before they begin to crawl. Playing on the floor helps the infant develop strength that sets the stage for rolling over. Nonmobile infants will be interested in interacting with you and looking at your face as you smile and talk. Watch the ways the infants react to your encouragement. As you talk to the infants, pause for their reactions.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Stay very close to the infants. Move, if necessary, so an infant can see your face. ■ A rattle may get out of an infant's range of reach if the infant rolls over or scoots. Keep the rattle within range as an incentive for practicing an emerging motor skill.

Enrichment ■ If an infant who remains on his/her back seems happy and content and interested in some tummy time, use two hands to roll him/her over. Encourage the infant to lift his/her head and chest. Avoid putting the infant in a crawling position, such as putting the infant's knees under his/her body.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An infant practices crawling in a special crawling zone that includes an opportunity to crawl under a small bridge.

Key Concepts
Crawl
Under

Materials Needed
Small table
Activity mat
Plush toy animal

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can crawl. Set up a fun crawling zone by placing activity mats in an open area along with a small table that serves as a fully open bridge to crawl under. Select a table that an infant can safely be under, including the possibility of sitting upright while under the table. Do not cover any of the sides of the table.

BEGIN: [*Greet and place the infant in an independent sitting position so he/she can move into a crawling position when ready. You also may place an infant on his/her tummy, but do not position legs and arms in a crawling position. It is important for the infant to figure out how to move into a crawling position.*]

ACT: [*Point to and enthusiastically describe the area where the infant can have fun crawling. Use gestures to supplement your words. Sit or kneel by the small table. Point to and describe the table as a bridge the infant might want to crawl under. Use the plush animal to demonstrate going under the bridge. Example: "Puppy is going under our bridge. Look, our puppy went in one side and came out on the other side." Repeat the demonstration.*

Encourage the infant to crawl around the space. Describe the infant's actions. Draw attention to the bridge, if appropriate, but do not overemphasize its use. See Extra Support ideas for helping an infant manage the bridge. Move about the space if it seems the infant would like to crawl toward you.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief summary of the infant's actions during the activity. Example: "You had fun crawling in a special place. We made a bridge with a table. You went under the bridge. Doggy went under the bridge, too!"*]

What to Look For—Option 2

Be attentive to whether it appears the infant would like you to be a coach near his/her side versus a desired destination of crawling across a mat or under the bridge. You might serve in both roles with the same infant during the same session, moving from coach to desired destination as the infant becomes more comfortable with the space and activity.

Some infants will be curious about the bridge without crawling under the table. Other infants may eagerly crawl under the table, maybe again and again. See the Extra Support tips for ways to reassure and tangibly support infants who show both interest in and reluctance to crawl under the bridge.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ If the infant is reluctant to move under the table, demonstrate how to put your head under the table and encourage the infant to also see what it looks like under the table. ■ As the infant watches, roll a ball under the bridge. ■ The infant may prefer that you crawl alongside (not under the table) as he/she goes under the bridge. ■ Encourage the infant to crawl alongside the bridge (not under the table) if he/she is not interested in going through the tunnel. ■ Give verbal support to an infant who is under the table. Establish eye contact and encourage him/her to crawl out independently.

Enrichment ■ Create a longer bridge by putting two tables together. ■ Add a sensory element by attaching a few ribbons to the edge of the table that will touch the infants as they pass under the bridge. ■ Emphasize the words "under" and "through." Example: "Sidney is crawling under the table. She is going through!" ■ In part of the crawling zone, stack several mats together to create a small bump and slightly higher flooring.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

Older infants practice crawling as part of pretending to be little kittens.

Key Concepts
Crawl

Kitten

Materials Needed
Baby Touch and Feel: Puppies and Kittens by DK Publishing

Small balls (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who are able to walk or can readily crawl. Having the infants chase small balls (while pretending to be kittens) is one of the suggested ways you can promote crawling in this activity. Use small balls that infants can easily hold with one hand.

Invite infants to join you in pretending to be kittens. Sing a familiar song with hand actions to welcome infants to the gathering. Song possibilities include "Mister Sun," "Itsy-Bitsy Spider," or "Little Fishy." Remember, hearing your voice is more satisfying to infants than recorded music.

After a welcoming song with hand actions, move closer to the infants and open the *Puppies and Kittens* book. Point to and name one or more of the six pictures of kittens. Use your own words to describe pictures you highlight. Ask the infants what sound a kitten makes. Some infants may make a kitten or catlike sound. Mimic any kitten or catlike sounds made by infants, or offer your own if no sounds are made by an infant.

Explain to the infants that we can have fun by pretending to be kittens. We can pretend we are kittens by crawling on the floor. Engage infants in one or more of the following options:

- Lead infants in crawling 5–10 feet in a particular direction and then crawling back to the gathering area. Create a reason for the outing, such as pretending to look for mother cat. Suggest the kittens pretend to sleep or take a nap on the floor after crawling so far.
- Pretend to be a cat and encourage the infants (pretending to be kittens) to chase you as you all crawl.
- Kittens like to chase little balls. Gently roll small balls for the infants (as they pretend to be kittens) to follow in a crawling position.

You may wish to repeat the activity or offer a second crawling option if infants remain interested in crawling. Conclude the session by encouraging infants to make a kitten noise, such as a meow. Some infants may enjoy looking at the book again as they calm down with your support.

What to Look For—Option 3

Infants who can walk are likely to enjoy returning to a crawling position as part of pretend fun. Even after learning to walk, some infants prefer to crawl in some situations, especially if crawling is a more reliable or secure form of locomotion than walking. Focusing on where to go as a pretend kitten

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

requires mental energies that might be easier to expend when not concentrating on a relatively new skill of walking.

Use of the book at the beginning of the activity is intended to introduce the kitten theme. Monitor infants' attention to the book so you can decide whether to offer the book again after crawling time, or during a later point in the day or week with individual infants. The crawling activity will be stimulating for infants and many will welcome a calming down opportunity after working hard to crawl. The book can be a useful tool in helping infants to rest. Some may wish to sit close to you or on your lap.

Infants cannot be expected to know what it means to pretend to be someone or something else. Still, your use of the word in this activity and in other contexts can promote vocabulary awareness over time.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If an infant(s) shows interest in one or more pictures of puppies in the book, acknowledge the interest and describe the puppy. If infants show more interest in puppies than kittens, adapt the activity to focus on puppies, including puppy-like sounds and the crawling segment. ■ Crawl alongside an infant who seems interested in but hesitant to crawl.

Enrichment ■ Instead of serving as the pretend cat that kittens chase (second crawling suggestion), invite one of the infants to pretend to be a cat that other infants (kittens) chase by crawling.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: texture bears, long paper, texture activity quilts, soft toys

Arrange a play space for nonmobile infants near a window where they can watch shadows and changes in the light. Provide items with various textures for infants to feel with their hands, such as the texture bears.

Crinkle a long paper and then straighten it out on the floor for a novel crawling surface. The sound of crawling over the paper will interest early mobile infants.

Crinkling the paper will prevent walking infants from slipping. Use textured activity quilts and soft toys to create interesting zones for mobile infants to explore independently.

Family Child Care

Toddlers, preschool-age, and older children may enjoy rolling on a mat or carpet. Guide the children so one child at a time can roll across the mat. Encourage children to roll as straight as they can. Some children will enjoy rolling over to a plush toy and giving it a squeeze. Example: "Roll over and get a hug from doggy." You may wish to sing the song "Five in the Bed" and emphasize the refrain of "roll over, roll over."

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BLOCK 18 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing about people families and animal families.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the pages and communicate about pictures of families.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help manage the book and communicate about pictures of families.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) A young infant looks at two dolls wrapped in bold, contrasting colors.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a tummy time that offers two similar dolls wrapped in different bold colors.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant engages in open-ended play with large beads of two different colors.

Self-Regulation

Focusing and Remembering

Option 1 (OO) A young infant is encouraged to persist in reaching for a desired toy.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant is encouraged to persist in scooting, crawling, or walking to get a desired toy.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) An infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver while looking in a large mirror.

Option 2 (IG) Older infants together look at and make facial expressions and hand motions in a large mirror.

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (OO) An infant participates in a nursery rhyme with simple hand motions.

Option 2 (IG) Infants participate together in a nursery rhyme with hand motions.

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

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BLOCK 18

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing about different ways to carry a baby.

Key Concepts
Book
Baby
Carry

Materials Needed
Carry Me (Babies Everywhere) by Star Bright Books

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Looking Ahead: The Communication/Language activity plan in Block 19 uses pictures taken in your room. Please take pictures of current infants and caregivers in your room for use in Block 19. Be sure to follow your center's procedures for securing consent.

Be Prepared: The book offers many photographs that will appeal to an infant. The last two pages, with names of countries and small photos, will be of limited interest to most young babies and can be omitted in your book sharing.

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

Hold the book about 12 inches from the infant. Point to pictures you describe.]

ACT: I have a book for us to read together! Here is a baby. The baby is riding on the back of its parent.

Our book is about ways to carry a baby. Our book shows pictures of babies being carried in different ways.

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

- *Use your own words to describe pictures. Example: "This baby is riding on the back of its dad. The baby is in a pack."*
- *Acknowledge what the infant seems to be looking at. Example: "You are looking at the baby being carried in a beautiful sling. Here is the sling."*
- *Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: You are cooing, Adrian. I think you like this picture of the mommy and baby.*
- *Vary the pitch and tempo of your voice.*]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We read a book about ways to carry a baby. Our book had many pictures of babies being carried by their parents. You smiled and made happy noises when you looked at the pictures!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn the pages and communicate about different ways to carry a baby.

Key Concepts
Book
Baby
Carry

Materials Needed
Carry Me (Babies Everywhere) by Star Bright Books

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: The book offers many photographs that will appeal to an infant. The last two pages, with names of countries and small photos, will be of limited interest to most young babies and can be omitted in your book sharing.

Invite an infant to sit with you to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to and describing the picture on the cover. Example: "Here is a baby and a parent. The baby is being carried on the back of the parent. Our book is about different ways to carry a baby." There are people babies and animal babies in our book! Our book is about families." Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:

- Invite the infant to help you turn pages of the book. It is okay if the infant skips some pictures.
- Point to and describe the pictures in your own words. Example: "Look at this baby The baby is being carried in front of the dad."
- Describe what the infant is looking at. Example: "You are looking at the baby being carried on the side of its mom. This mom and baby are in a field with farm animals." These mommies are carrying their babies."
- Spend more time describing pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are touching the sling that holds the baby. The mom is carrying the baby in a sling. The baby is smiling."
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are saying 'bababababa.' You like this picture in our book!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her knowledge and experiences. Example: "I have seen your mom carry you this way!"
- Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment to the book reading.
- Recognize infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading a book together, Zoe. You looked at pictures of different ways to carry a baby. You helped me turn the pages of our book. I think you liked this book."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help manage the book and communicate about different ways to carry a baby.

Key Concepts
Book
Carry
Picture

Materials Needed
Carry Me (Babies Everywhere) by Star Bright Books

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: The book offers many photographs that will appeal to an infant. The last two pages, with names of countries and small photos, may be of limited interest to the baby in your activity and can be omitted in your book sharing.

Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand close while you read.

Invite the infant to help hold the book and turn the pages. You may wish to keep all the pages in your right hand except for the page to be turned. This will help the infant to turn one page at a time. Follow the infant's cues as to how quickly or slowly to turn the pages.

Point to and describe the picture on the book cover. Example: "Our book is about different ways to carry a baby. There are a lot of pictures in our book."

- Point to and briefly describe images and actions in pictures in your own words. Example: "Here is a baby. Here is a dad. The baby is being carried on the dad's back. The baby is in a pack."
- Invite the infant to point to items you name. Example: "Where is the baby in this picture?"
- Offer more information about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are pointing to the hat on the baby's head. The hat is keeping the baby warm. The mom is wearing a coat. I think it is cold outside."
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are pointing to the baby who is touching the dad's neck."
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her experiences and understandings. Example: "Your dad carries you this way, too!"
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book sharing. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Matthew. You pointed to the babies. You said 'dadadada' when you looked at the pictures with dads. You turned the pages to see what was next. We had fun reading this book together."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

This book is likely to be of strong interest to most infants. The pictures of babies and parents will be appealing and the different ways of carrying a baby will be both familiar and unfamiliar. Follow the infant's lead for what you look at and the pace of the book sharing. It is not necessary to look at each picture in the book. An older infant may point or turn to a particular page in the book. You may wish to return to a picture of special interest to an infant. If the infant begins to lose interest during the book sharing, you may wish to give one gentle attempt to interest the infant before ending the activity. Example: "Let's look at the baby on the next page! How do you think the baby will be carried?" Following the infant's lead will help ensure the book sharing is a positive experience.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Consistently draw attention to babies shown in pictures. Babies are likely to be of keen interest to your infant. ■ Have another object available for the infant to mouth or chew instead of the book. ■ The infant may like to hold a baby doll or a toy animal related to the book.

Enrichment ■ An older infant may enjoy looking at a picture of his/her own parent or family after the story.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: photo albums or laminated photos of infants with their families

Provide opportunities for infants to explore photos of themselves with their parent(s) or family. Place the photos in a location that is accessible to infants, such as a special book area or laminated photos affixed low on a wall. Talk with infants about what they see in the photos. Point to particular people or objects. Respond to gestures and vocalizations.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Carry Me (Babies Everywhere)* by Star Bright Books; props for children to engage in family-related play, such as a dollhouse with people figures

Share this book with all the children in your care. Talk about the ways the babies are being carried. Encourage children to talk about ways they are carried (or were carried as a younger child or how a younger sibling is carried). After the book sharing, invite toddlers and older children to play with the dollhouse. Toddlers and older children may enjoy trying different ways to carry a baby doll. Infants may like to hold and manipulate a baby doll during the activity.

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BLOCK 18

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

A young infant looks at two dolls wrapped in bold, contrasting colors.

Key Concepts
Look

Doll

Materials Needed
2 dolls (see Be Prepared)

1 red square of fabric (see Be Prepared)

1 blue square of fabric (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Optional Reading:

Optional Reading
Look Look! by Peter Linethal

Black on White by Tana Hoban

Be Prepared: The brief activity described below is for infants who are 6–12 weeks of age. It also may be of interest to a somewhat older infant. It is important for the two dolls to be of similar shape and size so the infant is more likely to focus on the color. The red and blue squares of fabric should be solid, bold colors, and large enough to wrap around the doll as a blanket. Wrap the red fabric around one doll and the blue fabric around the other doll. The activity plan calls these "red doll" and "blue doll." There is an opportunity to use the dolls and red and blue fabric again in Block 21, Cognitive, Option 1.

Provide an opportunity for the young infant to gaze at two dolls during a friendly social interaction with you. Hold the infant in your arms and hold the red doll about 8–10 inches from the infant. Hold the doll steady for a moment, and then gently tip the doll left and right. Encourage the infant to look at the toy by talking about the red doll. Acknowledge any reactions the infant may have to the doll. Example: "You are looking at the doll's hair."

After a minute or less, gently move the doll out of the infant's sight. Describe what happened. Example: "We looked at a doll together. The doll had a red blanket. I put away the doll. Now we are looking at each other!" Give the infant a short break from intently looking.

Next, show the blue doll. Offer a brief introduction. Example: "Here is another doll. We can look at this doll now." Again, hold the doll steady for a moment, and then gently tip the doll left and right. Comment on the infant's reaction. Example: "You are looking at the doll's face. You are watching the doll's face move." Gently take the doll out of the infant's sight. Describe what happened. Example: "We looked at another doll. Our dolls each had a different color of blanket."

Repeat this short activity regularly with young infants, using other toys of high-contrast color.

What to Look For—Option 1

Young children develop an awareness of color differences early in life that can be used to strengthen an infant's vision. Looking at a strong, bold color requires considerable effort for an infant. Coordinated eye movement, color perception, and depth perception develop in the first few months of life. A strength of the current activity is the use of one solid, bold color at a time

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

in similarly-shaped toys. Early experiences with contrasting bold colors can support visual perception, which is an important aspect of cognitive development. It is not appropriate to teach specific colors at this early age. But an infant begins to learn there are words for color when you intentionally describe the solid color of an object. Your talking about color is a stronger learning experience for the infant than simply offering colorful items for an infant to explore on his/her own.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Give the doll to the infant to hold if he/she reaches for it. ■ Bring the activity to a close if the infant turns away, begins to stiffen his/her body, or fuss.

Enrichment ■ If the infant remains interested and alert after looking at the second doll, hold the two dolls together so the infant can see the contrasting colors. ■ Slowly move the red doll in an arch from one side to the other. This can foster an infant's skill in visual tracking.

Option 1 is informed by the following source: American Optometric Association (n.d.). *Infant vision: Birth to 24 months of age.* Retrieved from https://www.aoa.org/patients-and-public/good-vision-throughout-life/childrens-vision/infant-vision-birth-to-24-months-of-age

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant participates in a tummy time that offers two similar dolls wrapped in different bold colors.

Key Concepts
Doll
Different
Colors

Materials Needed
2 dolls (see Be Prepared)
1 red square of fabric (see Be Prepared)
1 blue square of fabric (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
My Colors Mis Colores by Rebecca Emberley

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants about 4–6 months of age. Secure two dolls that are the same size and shape. Wrap each in a different solid, bold color of fabric (red and blue) so the infant can focus on color differences. The activity plan calls these "red doll" and "blue doll." Multi-colored fabric should not be used for this activity. Red, yellow, and blue are distinct colors that help infants perceive color differences. Colors that are similar, such as red and orange or pink and lavender, are too close in tone for infants to discern. There is an opportunity to use the dolls and red and blue fabric again in Block 21, Cognitive, Option 1.

BEGIN: [*Arrange two dolls very close together at the center of the mat where an infant can easily see them. Lay the infant down on his/her tummy and sit very close so he/she can see and hear you. Invite the infant to look at the dolls by saying his/her name and drawing attention to the solid colors of each.*]

ACT: We have dolls to play with. The dolls are wrapped in blankets that are different colors.

Would you like to get one of the dolls?

[*Point to the dolls if the infant has not noticed them. Move a doll gently from side to side to draw attention to it.*

Encourage the infant to reach for a doll. Move a doll closer to the infant if necessary. If the infant does not grasp a doll, bring a doll close to the infant's hands. Describe your action. Example: "Braxton, you reached for the red doll. I am moving the red doll closer to you so you can touch it."

Describe the infant's actions with a doll. Example: "Braxton, you are holding the red doll with both hands." The infant may look, touch, or manipulate a doll. The infant may roll over while clutching a doll and continue exploration. If the infant loses grasp of a doll or moves away from a doll, make sure a doll is close enough to the infant for looking at or holding.

Watch for an opportunity to bring the second doll to the infant's attention. Example: "I am putting our other doll close to you. This doll is wrapped in a different color of blanket. The blanket is blue."

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

Continue to describe the infant's actions with a doll(s). Point to a specific doll you describe. Example: "Here is the red doll. Here is the blue doll. You are holding the red doll."]

RECAP: [*Describe the infant's actions with the two dolls. Example: "You looked at the red doll and the blue doll. You held the blue doll. Now we are finished with the dolls."*]

What to Look For—Option 2

This activity extends Option 1 for an older infant by offering two dolls at the same time and encouraging the infant to play with one or both dolls. Look for opportunities to point out the bold color differences without teaching specific colors. Vision researchers report that an infant's sensitivity to color improves within the first few months. At about four months of age, infants generally begin to perceive differences between red, yellow, blue, and green. Many infants show a preference for red. The typical color preference of infants at four months is (in order, strongest preference first): red, yellow, blue, green.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ If the infant becomes discontent in the tummy time position, move him/her to your lap. A more comfortable position may help the infant focus on the dolls. ■ Bring the activity to a close if the infant becomes fussy or begins to look away.

Enrichment ■ This activity can be repeated with other materials, such as two rings of similar size and texture that are in different bold colors.

Option 2 is informed by the following source: Zemach, I., Chang, S., & Teller, D. Y. (2007). Infant color vision: Prediction of infants' spontaneous color preferences. *Vision Research*, *47*, 1368-1381.

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BLOCK 18

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant engages in open-ended play with large beads of two different colors.

Key Concepts
Different

Materials Needed
5 large, red snap-lock beads (see Be Prepared)

5 large, yellow snap-lock beads (see Be Prepared)

Container

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
My Colors Mis Colores by Rebecca Emberley

The Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse by Eric Carle

Baby's First Book of Birds and Colors by Phyllis Limbacher Tildes

Be Prepared: This activity is for a mobile infant. Secure infant snap-lock beads that are the same shape and size in two different bold colors (five red, five yellow). The colors represent most infants' preferred colors at an early age. Put the 10 beads in the container. A clear container is best. The activity does not involve putting together or taking apart the beads.

Invite a mobile infant to play a game with colors. Sit on the floor facing the infant and place the container of infant snap-lock beads between you. Point out that the beads are different colors. Invite the infant to take the beads out of the container. You may wish to demonstrate taking two beads out of the container, one at a time. Say the color of a bead as you remove it from the container. Example: "I am taking a yellow bead out of our bowl." Encourage the infant to take out the other beads.

After some or all beads are removed from the container, encourage the infant to play with the beads as he/she wishes. The infant might make small piles of beads or return them to the container. Describe the infant's actions. Point out color differences. Conclude the activity by describing what the infant did with the yellow and red beads.

What to Look For—Option 3

Manipulating beads that are the same except for color is an informal way to strengthen awareness of color differences. The use of red and yellow represents infants' early color preferences, as noted above. The infant is not expected to learn specific colors or color names, but your naming colors can support the infant's emerging skill in color discrimination. Sorting the beads by color is not an expected part of the activity, although you may see a color preference or organization in the infant's play. Avoid teaching the infant to sort the beads. The infant may remove beads one by one from the container or simply dump all beads onto the floor. Positively describe the infant's approach.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ It is not necessary for all beads to be removed from the container in order for the infant to play with the beads. The infant might begin playing with 3–4 beads removed from the container and then remove several other beads as he/she elaborates on his/her play.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

Enrichment ■ Emphasize the word "out" when an infant takes beads out of the container. Emphasize the word "in" if the infant puts beads in the container. ■ Share one or more of the Optional Reading books after play with the beads.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: red and blue toys, yellow and green toys, books about colors (such as *The Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse* by Eric Carle), small sand pails in red, yellow, and blue

Suspend a new and colorful mobile where infants can see it closely when they are being held. Arrange red and blue toys in areas easily seen by infants. Place red toys within reach of the infants.

On low surfaces, place containers with red and blue toys. Infants will enjoy finding them and dumping them out. On another day, collect groups of yellow and green toys for infants to find.

Display books about colors. Comment on different-colored clothing. Provide small sand pails in red, yellow, and blue for mobile infants to fill and carry.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: two colors of paint; infant snap-lock beads; colored tickets; color-focused books, such as *Mouse Paint* by Ellen Stoll Walsh, *The Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse* by Eric Carle, *Baby's First Book of Birds and Colors* by Phyllis Limbacher Tildes.

In addition to the activity options for infants, the color-awareness skills of older children in your setting can be supported in creative ways. Preschool-age children may enjoy painting with two colors or playing a game of *I Spy* with color names. Older children may enjoy finding hidden snap-lock beads. Hide the snap-lock beads outdoors. Give each child a colored ticket for finding the beads. Example: "You have a blue ticket. Try to collect blue beads. Leave other beads in place for children to find." Children will enjoy the popular books listed above.

Option 3 is informed by the following source: Taylor, C., Schloss, K., Palmer, S. E., & Franklin, A. (2013). Color preferences in infants and adults are different. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, *20*, 916–922.

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BLOCK 18

Focusing and Remembering

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

A young infant is encouraged to persist in reaching for a desired toy.

Key Concepts
Reach

Play

Materials Needed
Toy (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can grasp a small toy. Select an age-appropriate toy that will have strong appeal to the infant, can be grasped with one hand, and might be partly explored in the infant's mouth. You are likely to use different toys for different infants.

BEGIN: [*Lay a nonmobile infant on his/her tummy. If the infant can sit independently or with support, place him/her next to you. Be sure the infant can see your face and hear your voice. Offer big smiles and a comforting voice.*]

ACT: [*Place the toy about 12 inches from the infant or within achievable reach. Do not put the toy in the infant's hand. If the infant does not move toward the toy after several moments, animate the toy by moving it gently to draw attention.*]

Look at our toy! You can reach for the toy. You can play with the toy.

[*Describe the infant's initial actions. Example: "Xander, you are holding your head up and reaching for the car. This is a big job for you!"*

If the infant shows signs of frustration in reaching the toy, offer reassurance with encouraging words and a pat on his/her back. You may move the car closer to the infant so it is easier to reach.

When the infant reaches the car, enthusiastically acknowledge his/her efforts with your words and gestures. Example: "You reached for the car. You got the car!" Encourage the infant to hold and manipulate the car. Describe the infant's persistence and actions as he/she explores the toy. Examples: "You are poking your finger in the holes of the car." "You are listening to the sound of the turning wheels."

Acknowledge the infant's vocalizations and/or facial expressions. Example: "You are smiling at the car."

Stay focused with the infant for as long as he/she wishes to explore the toy. It is not necessary to coax the infant to continue the activity.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you offer a brief summary of the infant's actions. Example: "You reached for the car. You looked at the different colors. You listened to the sounds. You had fun playing with the car!"*]

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An older infant is encouraged to persist in scooting, crawling, or walking to get a desired toy.

Key Concepts
Get

Materials Needed
Toy (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Select an age-appropriate toy that will have strong appeal to the infant. You are likely to use different toys for different infants.

Sit or kneel several feet from a mobile infant. Softly call the infant's name, display the toy, and slowly move the toy from side to side or draw attention to a feature of the toy. Example: spin a wheel on a truck. Invite the infant to come to you to get the toy.

Recognize the infant's progress in moving toward you. Examples: "I see you are coming to get this colorful car! You are almost here!" "You are working hard to get here!" Hold the toy out for the infant to grasp. Do not hand the toy to the infant. After getting the toy, the infant may shift his/her position to sitting or may want to sit on your lap to explore the toy.

Encourage the infant to hold and manipulate the toy. Support the infant's exploration by talking and maintaining your focus on his/her play. Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You crawled to me and got the car! You are smiling. You are touching the wheels on the car." Join in the infant's play if the infant shows interest, such as looking frequently at you and/or holding out the toy to you. Recognize the infant's vocalizations and/or actions with the toy. Example: "You are smiling! You are driving the car on the ground!"

Transition out of the activity when the infant begins to show signs of disinterest. Acknowledge the infant's persistence. Example: "You crawled to me to get the toy car! We sat together and played with the car. You liked the rattling sound of the wheels!"

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Your major role in both activity options is to provide a level of distance between the infant and the desired toy that is both challenging and achievable. Too little distance (challenge) runs against the goal of promoting persistence. Too much challenge may lead to disinterest and/or frustration. Look carefully at the infant's initial reactions and efforts to determine whether an appropriate level of challenge has been offered. It is easy to make adjustments by slightly moving the toy. Present the activity as a fun game and talk with the infant in a friendly, reassuring manner. Infants are most comfortable persisting and exploring when they feel safe and reassured by a responsive caregiver.

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ An infant's practice in persistence is more helpful when the infant is alert and not distracted by other things in the room. Remove other toys from the area where the activity is offered.

Enrichment ■ In Option 1, if an infant remains interested but seems tired of the toy he/she reached, offer a different toy for the infant to reach for and explore. Select a toy that offers a different shape or texture than the first toy the infant explored.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of age-appropriate toy cars and/or trucks

Arrange toy vehicles on a rug or mat in the play area. During floor time, invite one or several infants to play with the toys. Demonstrate "driving" a car back and forth. Encourage the infants to reach for the toy to hold and explore. Sit on the floor with the infants so you can easily talk with them about discoveries and persistence.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of toy cars and/or trucks appropriate for different age groups, assortment of blocks

Children of all ages enjoy playing with cars and blocks. Arrange the blocks in the center of the room and invite children to play with the blocks and cars. Ensure that each infant and toddler has an age-appropriate car to play with. Older children may enjoy building structures for the cars. Younger children may focus on either building or driving the toy cars. Infants and toddlers will benefit from observing the actions of their older peers. Some infants may enjoy having one or two soft blocks to use during the activity.

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BLOCK 18

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An infant participates in responsive interactions with a caregiver while looking in a large mirror.

Key Concepts
Mirror
See
You
Me

Materials Needed
Large mirror

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Invite an infant to join you in looking in a big mirror. Sit in front of the mirror with the infant securely in your lap or sitting close to you facing the mirror. Encourage the infant to look in the mirror with you. Example: "Hello, Julian! I am happy to see you. I see you in the mirror! Do you see me? I am smiling at you!" Acknowledge the infant's reactions. Examples: "You are smiling, Alyssa! You are smiling at me!"*

If the infant seems uninterested or uncomfortable, pleasantly end the activity and try engaging him/her in front of a mirror at a later time.]

ACT: [*Use the following strategies to support a responsive set of interactions with the infant:*

- *Point to the infant's reflection, and then your own, in the mirror. Example: "This is you, Julian. This is me."*
- *Describe the infant's facial expressions, vocalizations, and/or actions. Examples: "You are looking at me with big eyes, Alyssa!" "You are waving your arms and talking to me, Julian. I hear you! 'Ba-ba-ba, da-da-da.'"*
- *Draw attention to your actions. Examples: "I have big eyes, too! I am looking at you with big eyes." "I am waving at you, Peter. My hand is waving hello to you!"*
- *Imitate the infant's facial expressions and/or vocalizations while you look in the mirror.*
- *Act on what the infant seems to be looking at in the mirror. Example: If the infant is gazing at your face in the mirror and seems to be interested in your facial expressions, respond with a new face.*
- *Offer a facial expression, such as an exaggerated happy face or silly face or surprised face with mouth wide open. Name the feeling.*
- *Encourage the infant to copy your facial expression or actions, or to smile back at you.*
- *Pause frequently so the infant has an opportunity to respond or contribute.*]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of what happened during the activity. Example: "We looked in the mirror! I smiled at you. Then you smiled at me! You laughed when I made silly faces in the mirror. We had fun together."*]

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BLOCK 18

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Older infants together look at and make facial expressions and hand motions in a large mirror.

Key Concepts
Mirror

Materials Needed
Large mirror

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Cognitive

Invite two infants to sit side by side to look at themselves in the mirror. Sit next to the infants, off mirror, so you can talk with them about their actions and what they see. Support the infants' interactions with the following strategies:

- Help the infants orient to the mirror and setting by identifying the reflections in the mirror. Example: "Where is Julian in our mirror? Please wave your hand, Julian! We can see Julian raising her hand in the mirror. Where is Sam in our mirror? Please wave your hand, Sam! Now we can see Sam waving his hand in the mirror!"
- Describe each infant's actions in the mirror. Examples: "Javier is patting his legs. Pat, pat, pat, Javier!" "Cora, you are watching Javier pat his knees in the mirror."
- Encourage the infants to copy each other's actions. Example: "Cora is making a silly face. Samantha, do you want to make a silly face?"

Conclude the activity when one of the infants loses interest. Describe what happened during the time in front of the mirror.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

The activities build on infants' natural interest in closely watching faces of others. Infants will likely delight in looking at the images in the mirror. Although older infants may be developing an awareness that the image in the mirror is their own, many infants will not recognize their own image but will enjoy looking at the image of the baby reflected back at them. Some infants will enjoy imitating your expressions (Option 1) or the actions of a peer (Option 2).

Look for opportunities to support a give-and-take exchange in both activity options without directing the actions. Your guidance with infants' actions in Option 2 is valuable because infants cannot be expected to independently know how to take turns. If an infant prefers to watch only, describe your actions (or the actions of the other infant in Option 2) and positively conclude the activity. Avoid an entertainment approach where the infant watches you talk or make facial expressions. Promoting responsive interactions is the objective.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ In Option 1, periodically turn toward the infant and encourage him/her to look at you to help the infant connect the mirror images to the two of you.

Enrichment ■ Introduce a toy in Option 2 that infants can pass to one another while they look in the mirror.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: large mirror

Share a song with simple hand motions with the infants while they watch their reflections as part of participating in the song. One possibility is the "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" rhyme and corresponding hand actions in this block's Physical/Health activity options. Many infants will not recognize their own reflections in the mirror, but will enjoy looking at all the baby faces reflected back at them!

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of books with photos of facial expressions, several nonbreakable mirrors of different sizes throughout the room (such as a full-length mirror in the dress up area, a mirror affixed low on a wall for infants and young toddlers, and hand-held mirrors in a basket)

All children in your care can enjoy exploring mirrors. Older children can use a mirror to observe themselves dressing up and playing different roles. Older toddlers may enjoy having mirrors they can hold and carry as they play. Infants can look at themselves in a large mirror affixed to the wall. Invite older toddlers and children to make different faces and play copycat or imitation games in the mirrors.

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BLOCK 18

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

An infant participates in a nursery rhyme with simple hand motions.

Key Concepts
Listen
Watch
Move

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

BEGIN: [*Sit facing an infant who is sitting alone or with support. Talk with the infant to establish connection. Explain that you would like to sing some songs.*]

ACT: [*Look and smile at the infant while you sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." Move your hands and arms to the music in a calm manner. Do not use the accompanying hand motions.*

Describe the infant's reactions. Example: "You listened to me sing about a star. You are smiling. I think you like the song."

Repeat "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," this time with the accompanying hand motions.

Describe the infant's reactions.

Explain that you would like to sing the song again and move the infant's hands with the song. Repeat the song and gently move the infant's body unless there are signals from the infant that he/she does not want to participate in this way. See adjacent suggested hand motions and Extra Support scaffolding tips.

Smile and acknowledge any kind of infant participation. Examples: "You watched your little hands move to the music." "You kicked your legs while we sang the song."]

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Suggested Caregiver Motions

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
[*open and close both hands*]
How I wonder what you are.
Up above the world so high,
[*reach up with both hands*]
Like a diamond in the sky.
[*make a diamond shape by bringing index fingers and thumbs together*]
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
[*open and close both hands*]
How I wonder what you are.

RECAP: I sang a song and we moved our hands to the music.

[*Describe the infant's participation. Example: "You liked the song about the star! I saw you kicking your feet and smiling."*]

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

What to Look For—Option 1

The activity plan gradually increases the role and complexity of movements with "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" by beginning with your general movements, shifting to your more specific movements, and then gently moving the infant's hands. The song will be familiar to most infants and is part of other ELM activity plans. See the Extra Support scaffolding tips for adapting to infant responses.

The coordination of movements with the song is a central focus of the current activity. Hearing you sing and feeling the movements may be a new experience for some infants. Most infants will enjoy the sensation of moving to the song and may add their own motions, such as kicking. Infants are not expected to imitate your actions, although it is fine if they attempt to do so. Some infants may appear quite serious as they watch you sing.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If the infant does not enjoy the touch and movement, repeat the song making the motions yourself. ■ If the infant appears uneasy, lessen the degree of motion. You also might begin a song without moving the infant's hands and then add hand movements with the infant partway through a song. ■ Adjust the tempo of a song if there are signs the infant would enjoy a slower or faster pace. ■ Exaggerate the words.

Enrichment ■ Move the infant's feet instead of his/her hands.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development
Infants participate together in a nursery rhyme with hand motions.

Key Concepts
Reach
Hands
Up

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." This informal gathering adapts the Option 1 activity. The nursery rhyme and hand motions are the same as Option 1. Infants generally have a different experience with music and movements when participating with other infants. See Option 1 for lyrics and suggested hand motions.

Sit on the floor facing several infants who can sit independently or with support. Nonmobile infants will enjoy the songs from secure positions that are next to you.

Say each child's name to welcome the infants. Example: "I am happy to see (child's name), (child's name), and (child's name). We are all here together. Let's sing and have fun."

Explain that you want to share a song about a star. Stars are way up in the sky. Invite infants to reach with their hands, up to the sky. Sing the song "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" with hand motions. Encourage the older infants to imitate hand motions. Example: "Let's all make a star with our fingers." Demonstrate opening and closing hands.

What to Look For—Option 2

You may see early mobile and mobile infants moving their hands as you sing and demonstrate the actions. Holding hands up and/or moving fingers may represent infants' current skill in imitating your hand motions. Infants may prefer to watch and listen. Infants' language skills are strengthened by listening to familiar songs. Infants may understand some words they cannot say. The experience supports memory and receptive language. Some mobile infants may begin to say or sing a few words.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Help an infant do some hand motions if he/she reaches to you.

Enrichment ■ Slightly vary the tempo.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Nursery Rhymes* by Roger Priddy (available as a board book with flaps and also with a sing-along CD) **or** *My First Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes* by Lisa McCue **or, if available** *Clap Your Hands* by Kay Widdowson

Hold a nonmobile infant on your lap, sing familiar songs, and clap the infant's hands together if the infant seems to enjoy it. Sit on the floor with infants as they play. Some of the children may enjoy a repeat of the Option 1 (or 2) activity. Share a nursery rhyme book with one or several infants. Infants will enjoy hearing you read or sing one or more rhymes. Draw attention to how you are moving your hands.

Revised: 6/30/2023

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Miss Mary Mack* by Mary Ann Hoberman

For older children in your setting, consider reading *Miss Mary Mack*, a book based on a hand-clapping rhyme adapted by Mary Ann Hoberman. Children will enjoy the repetition and rhyme as you read the book. The large size is good for reading to a group of children. Older children also may enjoy talking about times when people clap, such as sporting or musical events.

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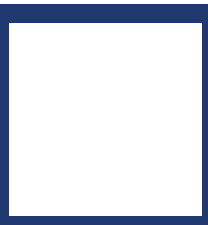
BLOCK 19 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant looks at and communicates with a caregiver about pictures of infants and adults in your room.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant holds, looks at, and communicates with a caregiver about pictures of infants and adults in your room.



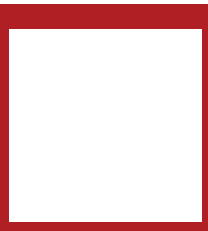
Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in guided exploration of a rattle.

Option 2 (OO) An infant explores features of a toy and a related book.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in guided play with a toy dump truck.

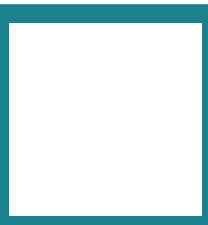


Self-Regulation

Paying Attention

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices focusing on an object manipulated by a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices focusing on objects as part of open-ended play with a caregiver.

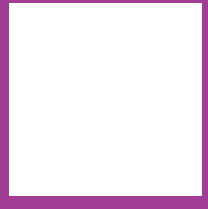


Social-Emotional

Exploring Feelings

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing focused on happy and sad facial expressions.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes happy and sad situations.



Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) A mobile infant participates in guided movements of legs and arms.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant participates in repetitive bouncing movements while listening to a rhyme.

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

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BLOCK 19

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant looks at and communicates with a caregiver about pictures of infants and adults in your room.

Key Concepts
Look
Pictures

Materials Needed
Action pictures from your room (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Be Prepared: As previewed in Block 18, the current activity plan uses pictures of current infants and caregivers engaged in activities in your room. You may wish to affix each picture to a loose piece of card stock that is laminated. This arrangement enables infants to hold and look at a single picture, and individual pictures can be displayed on a wall. Other possibilities include assembling the laminated pages of pictures into a book or using a sturdy photo album that older infants can manage.

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold pictures while also securely holding the infant.*]

EXPLAIN: We can look at some pictures of people in our room. There are pictures of babies and pictures of adults in our room.

ACT: [*Hold each picture, or the book of pictures, about 12 inches from the infant.*

Describe each picture. Point to aspects you describe. Example: "Look at this baby! This is your friend, Brianna. Brianna is smiling! She is holding a doll baby!"

Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "This is a picture of you! This is Samuel! You are looking at a book with Miss Jessica. Miss Jessica is reading your favorite book about the animals."

Acknowledge gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You made a happy sound, Simran! I think you like this picture of your friends playing outside."

Gently end the activity when the infant loses interest or you exhaust available pictures.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened. Example: "We looked at pictures of people in our room. You smiled when you saw a picture of Miss Jenny. Look, here is Miss Jenny right across our room!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An older infant holds, looks at, and communicates with a caregiver about pictures of infants and adults in your room.

Key Concepts
Look
Pictures

Materials Needed
Action pictures from your room (see Be Prepared in Option1)

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

Invite an infant to sit with you to look at pictures of people in our room. The infant may wish to sit on your lap, next to you, or stand close to you. Invite the infant to hold the individual pictures or manage the book pages as you talk about each picture.

Explain that the pictures show people we know. Point to and describe infants and caregivers shown in a picture. Describe what they are doing. Example: "Look at this baby. This is your friend, Christian. Christian is playing with a ball."

Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. "You are touching Isabella's eyes in this picture. You have eyes, too! Where are your eyes?"

Invite the infant to point to objects or people that you name.

Ask what is happening in a picture you anticipate will be familiar to the infant. Example: "This is a picture of you! What are you doing?" Acknowledge and expand upon any utterance. Example: "Juice. You are drinking juice in this picture. It is snack time."

Help the infant connect pictured actions to his/her own experiences. Example: "Jeremiah is crawling in this picture! He is crawling to get his favorite toy. You used to crawl. Then you learned to walk! Now you walk to get your favorite toys!"

Conclude the activity when the infant loses interest or there are no more pictures to look at. Recognize the infant's participation and interests in the picture sharing.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

The activity options promote vocabulary awareness with pictures that will be of interest to many infants. Younger infants may not show awareness of some people shown in the pictures, especially other infants. Avoid letting the picture-sharing activity become a test of who the infant knows! Also, some infants may not be included in your photo collection due to picture consent provisions. Focus on what people are doing in the pictures, especially routine or common activities that may be familiar to infants. Infants cannot be expected to remember a particular event. Infants often see and experience your room differently than adults.

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Return to pictures that seemed to be of interest to the infant. Describe again what is in the picture. Remember to point to people or features you emphasize.

Enrichment ■ Walk around the room with the infant after the picture sharing. Point to and describe some of the settings that were featured in the pictures.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: action pictures from your room

Place the collection of pictures in an accessible part of your room. If the pictures are laminated on individual card stock, display the pictures on a wall where infants can easily see them. Talk with infants about what is shown in the pictures. Infants will enjoy repeated descriptions of pictures of familiar people and activities.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: action pictures from your setting (see below)

Expand the collection of pictures of infants to include all children in your setting with appropriate consents, and encourage older children to describe for others what is happening in a picture. Focus on pictures of children engaged in familiar activities in your setting. Older children also may welcome an opportunity to show and talk with a family member about a picture(s) at drop-off or pickup time.

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BLOCK 19

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

A young infant participates in guided exploration of a rattle.

Key Concepts
Look

Reach

Materials Needed
Soft knit rattle

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Baby Touch and Feel First Words by DK Publishing

BEGIN: [*Place a nonmobile infant on his/her back. Sit close to the infant so he/she can easily see and hear you. Greet the infant by name.*

Hold the soft rattle steady about 10 inches from the infant. Encourage the infant to look at the rattle.]

ACT: [*Pause and then describe the infant's response(s) to the rattle. Example: "You are looking at our rattle."*

- *Move the rattle slowly from side to side. Describe any visual awareness or tracking. Example: "You are watching our rattle move from one side to the other."*
- *Shake the rattle slightly. Draw attention to its sound. Example: "Do you hear the rattle sound?"*
- *If the infant reaches toward the rattle, move the rattle closer to the infant's hand and encourage reaching. The infant may be able to grasp the rattle when it is nearer and unmoving. Acknowledge the infant's efforts. Example: "Alright! You reached for the rattle."*
- *If the infant gets ahold of the rattle, describe his/her exploration. Example: "You are using your hands to feel the rattle. Your eyes are looking at the rattle."*]

RECAP: [*Describe the infant's actions during the activity. "Ashley, you worked hard to look at the rattle. You followed the rattle with your eyes. You kicked your legs when you saw the rattle."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

An infant's eyes begin working together during the first few months of life, and eye-hand coordination starts to develop after the infant can visually track a moving object. Watch closely to determine whether the rattle is an appropriate distance from the infant's eyes. It may be appropriate to move the rattle closer. Your intentional focus on the rattle, along with your descriptions and questions, support the infant's exploration of the rattle. A young infant will not understand most of your words, of course, but offering pauses during your comments is a good way to allow the infant to respond nonverbally, especially with body movement and looking. Over time, an infant who experiences pauses as part of interactions with a trusted caregiver can come to understand that a pause is part of back-and-forth exchanges.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If the infant drops the rattle, retrieve it and hold it close to his/her hand. "Here is the rattle. You can get ahold of it again."

Enrichment ■ For an infant who is reaching and grasping the rattle, offer a rattle with a different shape. ■ Encourage the infant to shake the rattle. ■ Repeat the activity with the same infant during the coming week and note any changes in his/her visual tracking and eye-hand coordination.

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BLOCK 19

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant explores features of a toy and a related book.

Key Concepts
Car

Book

Materials Needed
Toy car (see Be Prepared)

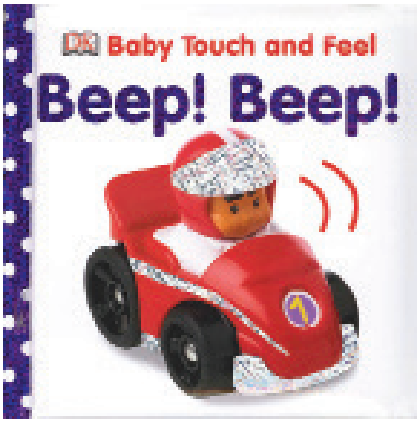
Baby Touch and Feel Beep! Beep! by DK Publishing

Basket (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can crawl. Place the toy car and the book into the basket or other small bin. If the infant has a strong interest in another type of toy for which you also have a related book available, use the toy and a related book of greater interest and not the toy car. Pairing the toy with a related book is an important feature of the activity.



Sit on the floor facing the infant and encourage him/her to look into the basket. Describe the contents of the basket and encourage the infant to remove the car and the book.

Follow the infant's lead during the activity. There is not a prescribed approach to exploring items in the basket. Give ample time for exploration. Maintain your focus and communication on the infant's interest. Example: Focus on the car if the infant is mostly interested in the car.

Describe and point to features of the item(s) the infant explores. Examples: Describe how a wheel moves on the car. Look at and describe whatever part of the book the infant looks at. Do this while the infant is holding or manipulating the item. Avoid taking an item from the infant's hands in order to describe it.

If the infant leaves one of the two items in the basket, point to and name the item and invite the infant to pick it up. Do this when it seems the infant is done exploring the item he/she takes from the basket or if you anticipate the infant has forgotten about the second item. Offer a connection between the toy and the related book if the infant remains interested. Example: (while pointing) "You have the toy car in your hand. Here is a picture of a car in our book." It is not necessary to look at all pictures in the book.

Remain close to the child throughout the activity.

What to Look For—Option 2

This activity puts together two familiar items in a novel way. An infant is likely to enjoy the toy and the pictures of a toy car. It is cognitively helpful for the infant to link the toy and a picture(s) of a similar item. Your description of an item, while the infant is exploring it, can reinforce the infant's exploration. Pointing to and naming parts of an item can help the infant understand there are words for objects and actions. Be careful that your description does not become direction. Each infant will have his/her distinctive approach to exploring the related items in the basket.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ If the infant does not pick up the remaining item in the basket in response to your suggestion, you may wish to pick it up and describe it while the infant continues to play with the other item. Example: If the infant plays with the toy and leaves the book in the basket, pick up the book and talk about 1–2 of its pages while the infant continues to play with the toy car. ■ Hold the infant on your lap for his/her exploration of the toy and related book. ■ Use the infant's name throughout the activity. Example: "Levi, you are sitting on my lap holding the blue car."

Enrichment ■ Put a piece of colored tape on the floor to represent a road. Some infants may be interested in placing the car on the line. Encourage the infant to "make the car go" on the taped line.

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BLOCK 19

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant participates in guided play with a toy dump truck.

Key Concepts
Truck

In

Out

Materials Needed
Toy dump truck (see Be Prepared)

Small toys (see Be Prepared)

Basket

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Communication/Language

Optional Reading
I Am a Dump Truck by Josephine Page

Be Prepared: Secure a toy dump truck with a dump box that can be tipped. Select a variety of up to 10 toys that individually fit into the dump box, such as stacking rings, animal figures, small blocks, nesting cups. Place the toys in a basket or other type of container.

Sit on the floor facing a mobile infant and invite him/her to play with the toy dump truck.

Place one toy in the dump box and move the truck closer to the infant. Name and describe the truck and toy inside. Demonstrate how the dump box tips, causing the toy to fall out. Put the toy back in the truck and "drive" it to the infant as you describe your actions. Example: "I put our toy back in the truck. Our truck is carrying a big ring. Our dump truck is driving to you."

Pause so the infant has time to look at the toys and think about what he/she might do. Then describe the infant's actions. Several features of the dump truck and toys may be of particular interest to the infant:

- rolling or pushing the truck
- turning the wheels with fingers or hands
- tipping and lowering the dump box
- loading toys into the dump box, maybe more than one toy at a time

Follow the infant's lead with the items and promote exploration by describing the infant's actions. Emphasize the concepts of in and out, and name each item that is placed in the truck. Example: "Tina, you are putting things in our dump truck. I see a little cup, a big stacking ring, a toy dog, and a rattle."

Offer a simple description with hand gestures regarding a problem the infant may encounter, such as toys falling out of the truck, or the truck encountering a barrier. Example: The infant will have a problem to solve if he/she tries to put all of the toys in the truck bed. Define the problem rather than immediately offering a solution. Example: "The truck is full. Things are falling out. Let's think about what to do." Pause for the infant to consider. If necessary, offer one suggestion, such as leaving some toys on the rug for a second load. Provide just enough help for the infant to accomplish one part of his/her task.

Close the activity when the infant gives a signal he/she is finished.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

What to Look For—Option 3

This activity supports development in communication/language, cognitive, and fine motor areas. Look for opportunities to support each of these areas in relation to the infant's current skills. Exploration of objects becomes more complex as infants develop. Infants often understand terms and concepts they cannot express with words. Example: An infant may gesture or move his/her body to communicate an idea about how the dump box moves. Generally, infants will communicate with non-verbal signals, including facial expressions. A valuable role for you is to offer words in simple language combined with gestures. Examples: "Tina, I see you are putting kitty in the dump truck." "Kitty goes in the truck." "Tina, you are giving kitty a ride."

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If the infant wants to tip toys from the dump box, but does not want to load the truck, assume the role of truck loader who describes the item and truck-loading actions. This arrangement can support positive, reciprocal interactions with the infant during play.

Enrichment ■ Point to pictures in the book *I Am a Dump Truck* to draw attention to the wheels and dump box. ■ Read the text of the book and talk with the infant about pictures, especially picture connections to the toy truck the infant is playing with. ■ Leave the materials out during the day so the infant can repeat or extend his/her exploration.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: see below

The vehicle theme of Options 2 and 3 can be extended with other toys with wheels that infants can explore. Option 3 can be extended with several containers and additional toys that can fit inside a container. Infants also benefit from playtime with items, such as the following: cloth and board books; small food containers; play materials that move or make sound when touched; bottles with water and soap to shake for making bubbles; bottles with dry materials that make a sound when shaken; pop-up boxes that open with buttons and knobs.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: containers, freeze toys, bag, ice, cornstarch, water

Identify play materials that will create interest for infants and toddlers. Toddlers will enjoy opening containers with toys hidden inside. Freeze toys in a quart container and encourage toddlers and preschool-age children to remove the toys. Ask questions to foster communication of ideas, and describe changes the children observe. Also, toddlers and preschool-age children may enjoy exploring the texture of cornstarch and water with their hands. Put the mixture into shallow tubs or a sensory table.

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BLOCK 19

Paying Attention

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

A young infant practices focusing on an object manipulated by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Watch

Touch

Materials Needed
Soft block

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Select a block that has a bold color or texture that will appeal to the infant.

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

Hold the block about 12 inches from the infant and begin moving it slightly from side to side.]

ACT: Do you see our block?

[*Pause for and acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are watching the block, Ximena. The block is moving back and forth."*

Slowly move the block a little farther from side to side while keeping it within the infant's line of vision. Describe the infant's response. Example: "You are moving your eyes. You are watching the block move."

Slowly move the block toward the infant's middle and hold it steady so the infant can touch it. Encourage the infant to touch or grasp the block. If the infant is not able to grasp the item, hold it near the infant's hands so he/she can touch it. Continue to describe the infant's actions and respond to vocalizations. Example: "I hear you talking! You are cooing. I think you like touching the block."]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you describe what happened. Example: "We played with a red block today. You watched the block move back and forth. You touched the block. It felt soft."*]

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BLOCK 19

Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

An older infant practices focusing on objects as part of open-ended play with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Look
Watch
Stack

Materials Needed
5 soft stackable blocks

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health
Social-Emotional

This activity is for an infant who can sit independently or with support. Invite an infant to join you on the floor to play with blocks. Sit across from the infant. Place two blocks in front of you and put the remaining blocks next to your side or behind you.

Place the blocks in several different arrangements, such as putting the blocks next to each other, or stacking the blocks. Describe what is happening with the blocks and acknowledge the infant's attention to the blocks. Example: "You are looking at our blocks. Our blocks are making a little tower."

Hand the two blocks to the infant and invite him/her to play with the blocks. Describe what the infant does with the blocks. After a period of exploring the two blocks, offer the infant 1–3 more blocks. The infant may incorporate the additional blocks into his/her current uses of two blocks or create a different arrangement. An older infant may want to stack the blocks. Assist if the infant asks for help. He/she may ask for help by looking at you, or reaching toward you, or handing a block to you.

Continue to acknowledge the infant's actions and reactions. Example: "You laughed when the blocks fell down!" Conclude the activity when the infant begins to lose interest. Emphasize how the infant looked at and played with the blocks. Example: "We had fun playing with the blocks, William! You watched me put the blocks in different ways. Then you played with the blocks. You made a big tower and knocked it over!"

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Blocks are a good material to use for helping infants strengthen their skills in paying attention. They provide many open-ended play opportunities and are often a favorite of infants and older children. The length of a session will vary considerably across infants. Infants may show disinterest in customary ways, such as looking away, fussing, squirming, or crawling/walking away. The ways in which an infant provides attention also will vary, especially in Option 1 where an infant's gaze may be the primary or only way of giving attention. Positively recognize any and all forms of remaining engaged with the blocks.

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Paying Attention *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ In Option 1, have a second type of block readily available to offer if the block you offer generates no visual interest. ■ In Option 2, stackable blocks are often preferred because an infant may find it challenging to stack or build with soft blocks. You may wish to have soft blocks available in Option 2 if you anticipate an infant will want to hold and explore with his/her mouth.

Enrichment ■ In Option 2, offer a larger assortment of blocks for the infant to play with. ■ In Option 2, copy a block arrangement created by the infant.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of soft blocks

Provide an assortment of blocks for infants to play with during floor time. Begin stacking or lining up some of the blocks to engage one or several nearby infants. Describe your actions with the blocks to encourage infants to notice your arrangement. Older infants may enjoy knocking down a tower of several blocks. Give each young infant a block to touch and hold.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: soft ball in a bold color

Invite older children to gather in a circle and pass the ball around the circle. Hold an infant on your lap as you sit in the circle with the children. Encourage the infant to watch the ball as it is passed around the circle. Show enthusiasm when it is the infant's turn to hold and then pass the ball. Older children may enjoy music playing as they pass the ball.

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BLOCK 19

Exploring Feelings

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Awareness of emotions

A young infant participates in a book sharing focused on happy and sad facial expressions.

Key Concepts
Baby
Happy
Sad

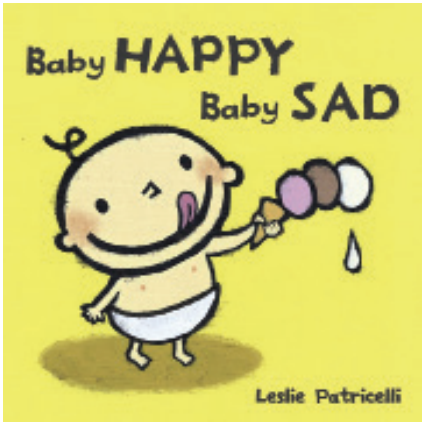
Materials Needed
Baby Happy Baby Sad by Leslie Patricelli

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

BEGIN: [*Sit with the infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm. This will allow for your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Hi, Christian! I am happy to see you today. Would you like to look at some pictures with me?"

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



ACT: I have a book for us to read together! Do you see the baby? The baby is smiling. I think the baby is happy!

[*Describe pictures in your own words. Emphasize the illustrated baby's facial expression. Point to features you talk about, especially facial expression and the object related to the facial expression. Example: "The baby is hugging a kitty. The baby is making a happy face!"*

Describe the infant's reactions to pictures. Example: "You are reaching for the picture of the baby with the red balloon. I think you like the red balloon!"

Use your voice to add interest, such as a lower or softer voice when describing a sad face and a higher-pitched, slightly faster tempo when you describe a happy face.

Look at and talk about as many pictures as the infant seems interested in. It is not necessary to look at all pages.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief description of what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We looked at pictures of a baby. Sometimes the baby was happy. Sometimes the baby was sad. You looked at the picture of the red balloon for a long time, Aliyah. Thank you for looking at the book with me."*]

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BLOCK 19

Exploring Feelings *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

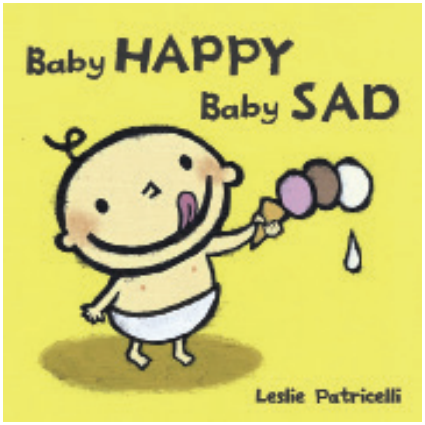
Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant participates in a book sharing that emphasizes happy and sad situations.

Key Concepts
Baby
Happy
Sad

Materials Needed
Baby Happy Baby Sad by Leslie Patricelli

Also Promotes
Communication/Language



Invite an infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or on your lap. Explain that our book shows things that are happy and things that are sad.

Describe the images on each page in your own words. Emphasize the baby's happy or sad face and the reason for a happy or sad face. Point to the baby's face and other items shown on the page related to the happy or sad face. Examples: "Here is a red balloon. The baby's face has a big smile. The baby is happy to have a balloon." "The baby's face is sad. The baby lost the red balloon. Here is the balloon flying away." "The ice cream cone fell down. The baby is sad because the ice cream cone fell. The baby does not have the ice cream cone."

Pause on each page for the infant to respond to the pictures. Acknowledge the infant's vocalizations and/or gestures. Spend more time on pages that seem to be of greater interest to the infant. It is not necessary to describe each page.

If appropriate, help an older infant connect sad and/or happy feelings to his/her own experiences. Example: "The baby fell down on the ground. The baby got hurt. The baby feels sad. Sometimes you fall down."

Conclude the activity by emphasizing that sometimes the baby in our book was happy, and sometimes the baby was sad.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Both activity options promote awareness of happy and sad emotions. Infants cannot be expected to have an understanding of how they and others feel, but very early in life children become aware of happy and sad feelings as expressed through facial expressions and sounds, such as laughing or crying.

This board book connects key words to two basic emotions. It also emphasizes how the same object can bring a feeling of happiness and a feeling of sadness. Examples: happy to have a red balloon, sad about losing the balloon; happy to have an ice cream cone, sad about losing the ice cream cone. Use pointing and gestures generously to describe what is happening on a page. The line drawings of facial expressions may especially need your pointing and description.

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Exploring Feelings *(continued)*

Option 1, designed for a young infant, focuses on facial expressions illustrated in the book. Option 2, designed for an older infant, emphasizes reasons for feeling happy or sad. These distinctions are reflected in the learning goals. It is fine if an infant in Option 2 shows more interest in the facial expressions than in the situations related to feeling happy or sad. Infants will approach the book with different interests and awareness of emotions.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Remember to pause frequently for the infant so the infant has time to make sense of what is shown on a page and potentially respond.

Enrichment ■ In addition to using your voice to express happy and sad feelings, offer happy and sad facial expressions.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several books with pictures of baby faces

Provide frequent opportunities for infants to look at pictures of baby faces. Talk with infants about the facial expressions of pictured babies, particularly happy and sad. Make exaggerated facial expressions of happy and sad. Invite older infants to imitate you.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of books with pictures of baby faces

As a complement to Options 1 and 2 for infants, invite older children to make happy and sad faces. Invite younger children to guess which faces are sad and which are happy. Invite older children to tell a reason why someone might feel happy or sad.

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BLOCK 19

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

A mobile infant participates in guided movements of legs and arms.

Key Concepts
Ride

Tall

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Self-Regulation

Place a mobile infant on his/her back when alert and ready for play. Explain that we are going to take a pretend ride on a bike to find out how tall we are.

Gently and slowly move the infant's legs in a bicycling motion. Make up a simple rhyme about riding that includes the infant's name. Example: "James is riding his bike. James is peddling hard. James is nearing the end of his hike. James is done riding his bike!" Pause at the end of the bicycling movements so the infant can rest.

If the infant remains engaged, explain that we are going to find out how tall (infant's name) is. Hold the infant's two hands and gently raise the infant's arms above his/her head. Say "(infant's name) is so tall!" when you raise the arms. Enthusiastically emphasize "so tall!" Put the arms back at the infant's side and again raise them gently while saying "(infant's name) is so tall!"

At the end of the activity you may wish to offer ELM's Self-Regulation activity focused on calming down. The most recent practice in calming down is offered in Block 17.

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BLOCK 19

Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An older infant participates in repetitive bouncing movements while listening to a rhyme.

Key Concepts
Bounce

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Self-Regulation

Invite a mobile infant 10 months or older to go riding on a pretend horse. The pretend horse is your knee/leg. Place the infant on your knee(s) facing you while you securely hold onto both of the infant's hands. Gently bounce the infant up and down while saying a rhyme of your creation. Example: "Ride a horse, ride a horse. (infant's name) is riding a horse. Not too fast. Not too slow. (infant's name) is riding a horse." Put your rhyme to music, if you wish.

Carefully monitor the infant's reactions to make sure your riding speed is not distressing. Immediately stop movements if the infant shows any signs of discomfort or negative reaction.

Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You are bouncing on my leg! We are pretending my leg is a horse!" The infant may wish to repeat the activity. Be mindful of overstimulating the infant. At the conclusion of one or two rounds, support the infant in calming down. The most recent practice in calming down is offered in Block 17.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Infants generally enjoy the repetitive physical movements offered in these two activity options. Option 1 can help strengthen leg muscles and arm reach. Option 2 can help an older infant coordinate his/her body during bouncing. The repetitive nature of the actions is important to the infant's ability to adjust to and anticipate the movements. Especially important is your attention to the infant's reactions, as described in the activity plans. Avoid tickling or other actions that might heighten an already stimulating activity. Gentle movement is essential. Both activity options are commonly called lap games due to their location in a caregiver's lap.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Carefully monitor the infant's reactions so you can determine whether a slower pace (Options 1 and 2) or shorter arm reach (Option 1) would be appropriate. ■ In Option 2, use a pretend pony instead of a pretend horse if you anticipate the infant is more familiar with a pony.

Enrichment ■ If you offer a lap game again, use a phrase, such as "we will do it again," to help an infant build awareness of the concept of again.

Option 2 is informed by the following source: Center for Early Literacy Learning (2010). Infant lap games [Online Forum]. Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute. Retrieved from: http://earlyliteracylearning.org/cellpract_pract/infant/i_group/sound_aware_grp.pdf

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: musical mobile, rattles, or other sound makers

Continue the activity options' emphasis on physical movement by providing rattles and other sound-making toys that infants can use with repetitive actions. Infants who are beginning to creep will enjoy touching a toy that makes a sound, such as a ball with a chime inside. Include a musical mobile if there are infants who would enjoy watching an object move and make sounds.

Family Child Care

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the lyrics and tune of "Shake Your Sillies Out" by the Wiggles. Online sources are available.

In addition to the activity options for infants, provide guided physical movement opportunities for older children in your setting. Teach the lyrics and tune of the song "Shake Your Sillies Out." Encourage children to sing along and do movements of interest, including shaking, nodding, clapping, jumping.

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BLOCK 20 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

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

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

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

Cognitive

Solving Problems

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

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

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

Self-Regulation

Getting Calm

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

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

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

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

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

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

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

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

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

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

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BLOCK 20

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing focused on waving hello and goodbye to different animals.

Key Concepts
Book
Wave
Hello
Goodbye

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

or

Hello, Baby Animals by Lorinda Bryan Cauley

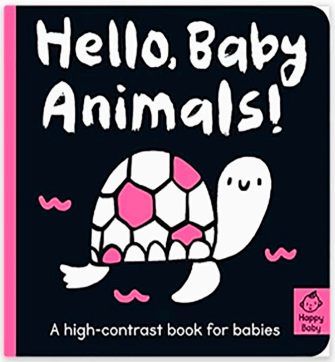
or, if available

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

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Revised: 6/30/2023

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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BLOCK 20

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

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

Key Concepts
Book
Wave
Hello
Goodbye

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

or

Hello, Baby Animals by Lorinda Bryan Cauley

or, if available

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

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Revised: 6/30/2023

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

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

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

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BLOCK 20

Exploring Words *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

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

Key Concepts
Book
Wave
Hello
Goodbye

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

or

Hello, Baby Animals by Lorinda Bryan Cauley

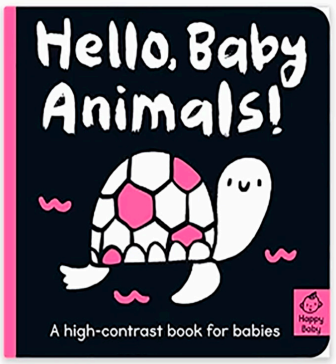
or, if available

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

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Revised: 6/30/2023

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



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

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

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

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

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

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

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

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

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

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of stuffed animals or animal figures

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

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

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

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BLOCK 20

Solving Problems

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills
A young infant watches a caregiver manipulate an appealing toy.

Key Concepts
Watch

Materials Needed
Small toy (see Be Prepared)
Cloth

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Self-Regulation

Optional Reading
Tummy Time by Mama Makes Books

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

Revised: 6/30/2023

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

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

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

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

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

What to Look For—Option 1

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

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

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

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

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

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

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

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

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

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

Key Concepts
Watch

Under

Materials Needed
Small toy (see Be Prepared)

Cloth

Also Promotes
Self-Regulation

Communication/Language

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What to Look For—Option 2

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

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

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

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

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

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

Key Concepts
Watch

Inside

Materials Needed
Small toy car

Mailing tube (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Self-Regulation

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

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

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

What to Look For—Option 3

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

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

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

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

Option 3 is informed by the following source: McLeod, S. (2018). The sensorimotor stage of cognitive development. Retrieved from https://www.simplypsychology.org/sensorimotor.html

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Interest Area

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

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

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

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

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

Family Child Care

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

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

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

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

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BLOCK 20

Getting Calm

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

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

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

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

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

ACT: Are you ready for a fun song?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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BLOCK 20

Getting Calm *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

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

Key Concepts
Song
Calm

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

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

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

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

What to Look For—Options 1–2

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

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

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

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

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

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

Interest Area

Materials Needed: none

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

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: none

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

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BLOCK 20

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

☑

Skill and Goal

Social interaction skills

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

Key Concepts

Song

Materials Needed

None

Also Promotes

Communication/Language

Physical/Health

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

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

Key Concepts
Music

Dance

Materials Needed
Music player with lively music

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

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

What to Look For—Options 1–2

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

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

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

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

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: none

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

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: music player with different music styles

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

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BLOCK 20

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

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

Key Concepts
Reach

Hold

Materials Needed
2 small soft toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

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

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

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

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

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

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

Key Concepts
Shake

Materials Needed
Rattles—1–2 per infant and caregiver

Basket

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

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

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

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

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

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BLOCK 20

Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

Older infants practice bringing both hands together by clapping.

Key Concepts
Clap

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

Revised: 6/30/2023

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

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

Open, Shut Them

Suggested Caregiver Motions

Open, shut them.
[*put open hands apart and then together*]

Open, shut them.
[*put open hands apart and then together*]

Give a little clap.
[*gently clap hands*]

Open, shut them.
[*put open hands apart and then together*]

Open, shut them.
[*put open hands apart and then together*]

Put them in your lap.
[*place open hands in your lap*]

What to Look For—Options 1–3

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

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

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

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

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

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

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

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

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

Interest Area

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

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

Family Child Care

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

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

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BLOCK 21 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Words

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing focused on pictures of young children and their family members.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn pages and communicate about young children doing things with their families.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help manage the book and communicate about babies doing things with their families.

Cognitive

Solving Problems

Option 1 (OO) A young infant is offered a choice of one of two toys to touch, hold, or manipulate.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant is offered a choice of one of two toys to use in open-ended play.

Self-Regulation

Focusing and Remembering

Option 1 (OO) A young infant is encouraged to persist in watching a caregiver manipulate a nylon scrunchie and a cup.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant is encouraged to persist in pulling a scrunchie from a cup.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates with a caregiver in responsive interactions focused on pictures of farm animals.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant engages with a caregiver in play using farm animal figures.

Physical/Health

Using Our Hands

Option 1 (OO) A young infant adjusts to gentle movement in a caregiver's arms while listening to calm music.

Option 2 (IG) Infants participate in songs with hand motions led by a caregiver.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants listen to music with the opportunity to move an object to a song.

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

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BLOCK 21

Exploring Words

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant participates in a book sharing focused on pictures of young children and their family members.

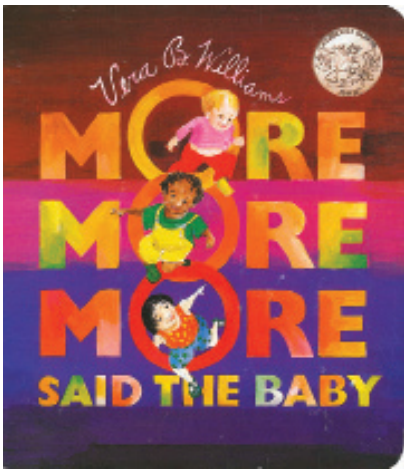
Key Concepts
Book
More

Materials Needed
"More More More," Said the Baby by Vera B. Williams

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm so you can use your hands to hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

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



ACT: Here are pictures of babies. The babies are smiling. They are moving their bodies. I think the babies are having fun!

Our book tells us what some babies do with people in their families.

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

- *Use your own words to describe people, objects, and actions shown on the page. Point to what you describe. Example: "This is a grandma. The grandma is hugging the baby. The grandma loves the baby."*
- *Vary the pitch and tempo of your voice to add interest. Emphasize repetitive phrases, such as "more, more, more" and "right in the middle."*
- *Respond to gestures and/or vocalizations.*
- *If the infant's interest or time is limited, focus on a section of the book, such as little guy, little pumpkin, or little bird. This is preferable to omitting pages.*]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened. Example: "The babies in our book said 'more, more, more!' You cooed when we looked at the picture of the baby hugging his grandma. Thank you for sharing this book with me!"*]

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

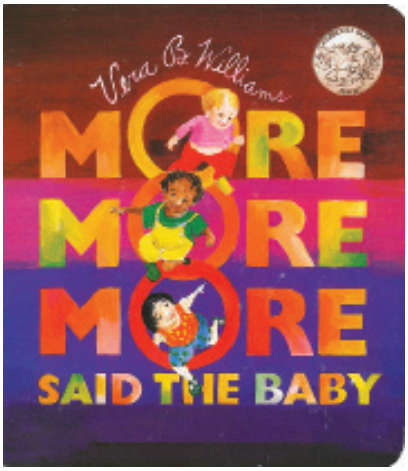
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language

An infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help turn pages and communicate about young children doing things with their families.

Key Concepts
Book
More

Materials Needed
"More More More," Said the Baby by Vera B. Williams

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health



Invite an infant to sit next to you or on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and encouraging the infant to look at the picture with you. Example: "Look at the babies! The babies are smiling! Our book tells us about babies doing fun things with their families." Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:

- Invite the infant to help you turn the pages.
- Describe pictures in your own words. Point enthusiastically to what you describe. Some pictures may be challenging to figure out without your explicit help. Example: "Here is the grandma. Here is the baby on the grandma's lap. The grandma is tasting the baby's toes! The baby is laughing. The baby likes this game!"
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are pointing to your tummy. The daddy is kissing his baby's tummy! This is the baby's tummy. This is your tummy!"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences. Example: "The baby is playing with his daddy. You play with your daddy!"
- Emphasize the repetitive words and phrases with a slower, lower, or higher voice. Examples: more, more, more; right in the middle; right on either side; right on the ends. Use a quieter voice for the section on little bird because the baby is tired and ready for bed.
- If time or infant interest is limited, focus on a section of the book rather than omitting pages. The sections are: little guy, little pumpkin, and little bird.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book sharing. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Nora. We looked at the pictures of the babies with their families. You pointed to the picture of the baby going to sleep. I think you liked this book!"

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language

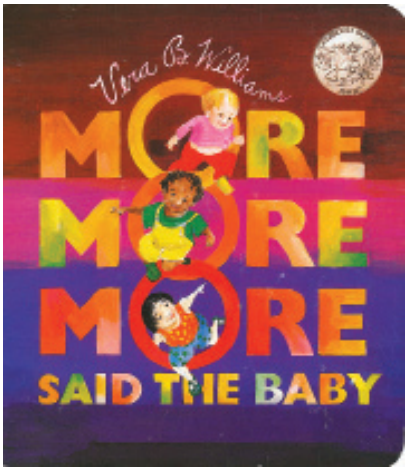
An older infant participates in a book sharing with opportunities to help manage the book and communicate about babies doing things with their families.

Key Concepts
Book
More

Materials Needed
"More More More," Said the Baby by Vera B. Williams

Also Promotes
Social-Emotional
Physical/Health

Invite an older infant to read a book with you. The infant may wish to sit next to you or stand close while you read. Introduce the book and invite the infant to help you hold the book and turn the pages. A standing infant may want to use one hand to help turn the pages.



Once the infant is comfortable, point to and describe the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look at the babies. The babies are smiling and having fun! Our book is about babies doing things with people in their families." Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:

- Use your own words to describe people, objects, and actions in the pictures. Point frequently to what you describe.
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences. Example: "You are looking at the baby hugging his grandma. You have a grandma, too!"
- Spend more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant.
- Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You said 'more!' All of the babies in our book say 'more, more, more!' You are helping me read our book!"
- Emphasize the repeated words 'more, more, more!' Explain that the babies in our book say "more" because they want to do a fun thing again. Some infants may repeat a version of the word 'more' with you.
- Vary the tone and tempo of your voice with the repeated phrases "right in the middle," "right on either side," and "right on the ends." Use a quieter voice for the little bird section because it involves a sleepy character and bedtime.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped me hold our book, Jayce. You pointed to the running baby. You helped me say 'more!' You turned the pages to see what was next! We had fun reading this book together."

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Exploring Words *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Many infants will connect with this book's familiar theme of playing with a loved one. Infants will likely enjoy looking at the rich colors of the illustrations. Some of the pictures may be challenging to decipher without your guidance. Help infants to understand what is happening in the pictures by describing the actions of the babies and their family members. Infants will show interest in the pictures by gazing, pointing, touching, or using their hands to bat at or tap the pictures. Infants may also express interest in the book by cooing, babbling, and/or saying a word or part of a word.

The book is longer than what some infants can be expected to pursue. Focus on one or two of the book's three sections. Each section has a tidy storyline. You can return to another section at a later time if an infant remains interested in the book.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Remember the importance of your gestures and facial expressions in communicating with an infant.

Enrichment ■ Talk with an older infant about fun things in your room that infants like to do again (more, more, more).

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *"More More More," Said the Baby* by Vera B. Williams

Be Prepared: Learn the American Sign Language sign for "more."

Young infants may enjoy learning the ASL sign for the word more. Sign "more" each time you say the word while reading the book. This sign can be used throughout the day, such as when you ask an infant if he/she would like more of something. Many infants will quickly learn and use this simple sign. Consistently acknowledge an infant's use of the "more" sign. Example: "I see your hands. You are saying 'more!' You are telling me you want 'more' milk!"

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *"More More More," Said the Baby* by Vera B. Williams

This book will be of interest to older children in your setting. Encourage older children to recite some of the book's repetitive phrases with you. Some older infants may imitate a version of the words "more, more, more!" Talk with children about specific parts of the colorful illustrations. Invite children to tell about things they like to do again and again (more, more, more) with their loved ones.

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BLOCK 21

Solving Problems

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Be Prepared: Select two similar types of toys that are different in appearance. Dolls are suggested because infants generally like toys with simple faces. Make sure there is at least one striking difference between the two dolls. You may wish to use the dolls and red and blue pieces of fabric (serving as blankets) offered in Block 18, Cognitive, Options 1 and 2.

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

A young infant is offered a choice of one of two toys to touch, hold, or manipulate.

Key Concepts
Doll

Materials Needed
2 dolls (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Baby Faces by DK Publishing

Place a nonmobile infant on his/her tummy or back on the floor. Sit facing the infant so he/she can clearly see you and hear your voice. Use the infant's name, your smiles, and talk to help the infant feel comfortable.

Place the two toys about 12 inches from the infant at the same time. Gently move the two dolls from side to side to draw attention to each. Communicate enthusiasm for the dolls. Describe the infant's reaction to the two toys.

If the infant looks at one doll more than the other, move the visually favored doll toward the infant so he/she can touch it or hold it. Lightly touch the infant's hand with the doll if he/she does not reach for or grasp it. Encourage the infant to touch or hold the doll. Place the other doll to your side.

If the infant does not look at one doll more than the other doll, or reach for a doll, put one doll temporarily aside and move the remaining doll gently from side to side. Then place this doll aside and move the other doll gently from side to side in front of the infant. If the infant reaches for a doll when you are moving it, give it to the infant to hold and explore. If the infant does not reach for a doll when you move each, show the two dolls together again. Watch carefully to see if the infant looks at one doll more than the other or reaches toward one of the dolls.

Move the doll that seems to be favored (or a doll of your choice if there does not seem to be a favored doll) toward the infant. It is important for the infant to have access to a doll to touch, hold, or play with. Describe the doll and the infant's actions with the doll. Provide both dolls if the infant shows interest in both.

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BLOCK 21

Solving Problems *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving

An older infant is offered a choice of one of two toys to use in open-ended play.

Key Concepts
Choose

Play

Materials Needed
2 similar toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Baby Touch and Feel. Things That Go by DK Publishing

Be Prepared: Select two similar types of toys that are different in a major way. Some possibilities include two chunky vehicles, such as a truck and a car, or two different balls, such as bubble ball and a ball with holes. The activity description assumes a truck and a car (two chunky vehicles) are offered. The learning goal is not supported if two different types of toys, such as a vehicle and a ball, are used.

Sit on the floor next to a mobile infant. Use the infant's name when you show two different toys. Example: "Hello, Ellie. Here is a car. Here is a truck. Would you like to play with the car or the truck? You can choose the car or the truck." Point and use hand gestures so the infant has clear communication from you about the choice.

If the infant does not promptly reach for a toy, give some attention to the toy choices by gently moving and describing each. Example: "Our toy truck has eyes! Our car has a smooth top." Then put the two toys in the same location on the floor in front of the infant. Do not place one toy closer to the infant. Again, point and use your words to ask which toy the infant would like to play with. If the infant continues to show no toy preference, remove the two toys from the play space and offer a different set of toy possibilities to the infant, without directly asking the infant to make a choice. Example: "I think you are not interested in these toys. I will put them away. Let's find something else you would like to play with."

If the infant reaches for or grasps one of the two toys you present, emphasize the decision and put away the toy not selected. Example: "You picked the little car. The car is fun to play with. I will put away the truck."

Support the infant's play with the toy. Example: Create a pretend road or a ramp for a toy vehicle. A ramp can be easily made using any rigid material with its end lifted up slightly. Create a target for a ball by putting a basket on its side. Describe the infant's play explorations.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

It is unusual for an infant to be offered two choices of similar toys. Typically an infant is offered one toy or a collection of toys. The opportunity to choose from two toy possibilities can support the infant's attention to characteristics of each toy. Showing two similar types of toys heightens the cognitive benefits

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

of looking at two objects presented together. Making the favored toy available is an appropriate form of caregiver responsiveness to the infant's interests.

Look carefully at the infant's reactions to the two toys. In a younger infant (Option 1), you may see a slight change in the infant's gaze or facial expressions. Infants often increase movements of their legs and arms when presented with interesting toys. Some infants may focus more on you than on the toys. If the infant seems mostly interested in your face, smile and talk with the infant. It is fine to put the toys aside if the infant wants to interact with you more than he/she wants to look at the toys.

With an older infant (Option 2), you are likely to see the infant touch or grasp the toy. The infant may want to touch or manipulate each toy as part of decision-making. This exploration is appropriate to support, as indicated in an Extra Support tip. Eventually the infant should be encouraged to select one toy, and the toy not selected should be set aside (see Extra Support tip). Later, if the infant wishes to also play with the toy not selected, make it available with enthusiasm.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Remember that pointing adds clarity to choices offered verbally. Infants cannot be expected to understand many words others say. ■ In Option 2, provide time for an infant to explore each toy before asking him/her to make a choice. ■ Instead of removing the toy not selected in Option 2 from the play area, consider placing it next to a familiar soft toy animal, such as a cloth bear, for the toy animal to play with. Example: "You can play with the truck. Our bear can hold the car."

Enrichment ■ If you repeat Option 2 with an infant who readily selected a toy the first time, offer three, rather than two, toy choices.

Interest Area

Materials needed: similar sets of toys as described below

During play interactions and care routines, offer infants a choice when possible, such as placing two wobble toys on the floor at playtime and providing two soft toys side by side. Example: a little bear and a bigger bear. Place similar items together in pairs, such as two matching rattles. Provide a bin or container the infant may use with the toys. Putting things in and dumping them out is a cognitively beneficial activity that also promotes motor skills. Show a mobile infant two books and encourage him/her to pick one to share with you.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials needed: materials used during play times, as described below

There are numerous times during the day for encouraging choice-making among toddlers and preschool-age children. During play periods, sit on the floor and tune in to play interactions. Verbalize choices for toddlers. Offer a slight pause between choices and emphasize the word "or." Examples: "You could wear the vest or the firefighter coat." "Would you like me to read this book about a kitten or this book about ponies?" "Let's build something together with our blocks. Would you like to build a zoo, or a farm, or something else?"

Preschool-age and older children are beginning to notice more detail in the environment. Seeing how things are alike and different is interesting to children at this age. Intentionally offer choices that provide opportunities for expanding awareness. Examples: "Would you like the pale yellow paint, or the gold paint?" "Do you want a long block or a short block?"

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BLOCK 21

Focusing and Remembering

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

A young infant is encouraged to persist in watching a caregiver manipulate a nylon scrunchie and a cup.

Key Concepts
Watch
Inside

Materials Needed
1 nylon bath scrunchie
1 plastic cup

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: This activity is for a nonmobile infant. The scrunchie should fit fully inside the cup. The fit does not need to be firm.

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a reclining position. Ensure the infant can clearly see you. Smile and make eye contact with the infant.*]

EXPLAIN: [*Introduce the scrunchie by holding it in front of the infant's chest.*]

Look what I have! This is a scrunchie.

ASK: Would you like to watch me move our scrunchie?

ACT: [*Slowly move the scrunchie from one side to the other. Then introduce the cup and hold it at the infant's midline so he/she can easily see it. While the infant is watching, put the bath scrunchie into the cup. Describe your action. Hold the cup with the scrunchie inside in front of the infant, so the infant can see what happened to the scrunchie. Then use several fingers to remove the scrunchie from the cup and move it around in front of the infant. Conclude by putting the scrunchie in the open palm of one hand and the cup in the open palm of your other hand. Put both hands (with items) within reach of the infant. Encourage the infant to touch or hold whatever seems to attract his/her visual attention. Encourage the infant to play with the items, if interested.*]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you offer a brief summary of the activity. Example: "You watched our scrunchie move around and go inside a cup. I took the scrunchie out of the cup. You had fun touching the scrunchie."*]

Early Learning Matters

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BLOCK 21

Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An older infant is encouraged to persist in pulling a scrunchie from a cup.

Key Concepts
Squeeze

Pull

Materials Needed
1 nylon bath scrunchie

1 plastic cup (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently. Select a cup size that will provide a firm fit for the scrunchie when the scrunchie is put inside the cup. If the fit is too loose, it may not be challenging for the infant to remove the scrunchie from the cup.

Invite an infant to sit next to you or across from you for a game. Hold the bath scrunchie in the open palm of your hand in front of the infant and encourage the infant to touch it or hold it. Provide time for the infant to manipulate the scrunchie. Demonstrate squeezing the scrunchie or moving it between your thumb and index (pointer) finger. Encourage the infant to squeeze the scrunchie with his/her hand or fingers.

Put the cup in front of the infant. Show that the cup is empty. Invite the infant to put his/her hand in the empty cup when you explain it is empty. Then put the scrunchie in the cup. Push the scrunchie to the bottom of the cup so the fit is tight. Then invite the infant to take the scrunchie out of the cup. Use gestures when you offer the invitation to remove the scrunchie.

Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You are pulling on the scrunchie." Recognize the infant's persistence. Example: "You are working hard to get the scrunchie out of the cup!"

If the task seems frustrating to the infant, offer to help pull on the scrunchie, but wait for the infant to look at you, stop pulling on the scrunchie, or somehow indicate your help would be appropriate. It is important for the infant to remain in charge of the task of removing the scrunchie independently or with you. If you help, emphasize you are doing the pulling together. One approach is for you to pull a little, and then the infant pull a little. Avoid pulling out the scrunchie while the infant watches. Leave the final pull to the infant.

Conclude the activity by emphasizing the infant's efforts. Examples: "You worked hard to pull the scrunchie out of the cup, Jacob." "We worked hard together to get the scrunchie out of the cup!" The infant may want to repeat the activity.

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–2

A bath scrunchie is a novel play material and its combination with the cup is likely to be appealing in both activity options. Infants are generally interested in taking things apart and many will enjoy the task of removing the scrunchie from the cup in Option 2. The brief Option 1 activity is designed to strengthen an infant's control of visual attention. Placing the scrunchie inside the cup is not intended to be a hiding game. Watch the infant's gaze carefully so you know when to make the items more fully accessible (visually) to the infant.

Infants may respond differently to the Option 2 task of removing the scrunchie from the cup. Fine motor skills are key to this activity. Look carefully to determine when your assistance should be offered. Some infants may become frustrated sooner than others. Others may persist until they are able to independently remove the scrunchie. Expressing interest in the infant's actions will help foster their persistence. Ensure the activity is fun and enjoyable for the infants, with each infant in Option 2 experiencing success.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ If you anticipate an infant may have difficulty removing the scrunchie from the cup in Option 2, drop (versus push) the scrunchie in the cup so the fit is loose. ■ Try the activity at a different time of the day if the infant is not initially receptive.

Enrichment ■ In a repeat of the Option 2 game, invite an infant to put the scrunchie in the cup. Some infants may enjoy placing the scrunchie into, and then pulling it out, of the cup several times. ■ Option 2 could be offered at the same time to several infants, with each infant having his/her own materials. Ensure the gathering does not become competitive.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several bath scrunchies and similar-sized foam balls in a basket, several stacking cups in assorted sizes

Place the stacking cups near the basket of scrunchies and foam balls. During floor time, invite one or several infants to explore the new materials. Some infants may enjoy dumping out the contents of the basket. Others may reach in and pull out one toy at a time. Help interested infants push a toy into a cup for them to remove.

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several bath scrunchies

Provide these new play items to enhance focus and persistence in familiar play areas. Place the bath scrunchies in different parts of the play environment, such as the water table (with a small amount of soap), the kitchen area, and the art area for painting. The scrunchies can also be used in place of soft balls during a variety of activities. In addition to the two activity options, infants can be supported in holding and exploring a scrunchie during play.

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BLOCK 21

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates with a caregiver in responsive interactions focused on pictures of farm animals.

Key Concepts
Animals
Farm
Touch

Materials Needed
Baby Touch and Feel: Farm by DK Publishing

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap for talking about pictures in a book. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm so your hands can manage the book while also securely holding the infant.*

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Hi, Caleb! You woke up and had your bottle. Let's talk about some pictures of animals now."

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

Look at the ducklings on the cover of our book. The ducklings live on a farm.

[*Pause for the infant to respond to your attention. Acknowledge the response. Example: "You are looking at me and smiling, Deja. I can hear you talking! You are saying 'Ba-ba-ba'."*]

ACT: [*Use the following strategies to promote interactions with the infant:*

- *Use your own words to describe some aspect of a picture. It is not necessary to look at each picture.*
- *Consistently pause after you say something, just as you would in a conversation.*
- *Recognize the infant's nonverbal communications. Example: "You are batting at the picture of a sheepdog. This dog has soft fur. Would you like to touch the dog's soft fur?"*
- *Maintain eye contact throughout and remember the importance of your facial expressions.*
- *Encourage the infant to touch pictures that seem to be of interest. Demonstrate touching the picture when you invite the infant to touch a picture. Then move the page within easy reach of the infant's hand, but don't move the infant's hand onto the picture. Example: "You are looking at the brown cow, Caleb. The brown cow has soft fur, see? Would you like to touch the cow's soft fur?"*]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe the exchange. Example: "We talked about pictures of farm animals. We looked at the picture of the sheepdog for a long time, Deja. We had fun looking at the picture of the yellow chick!"*]

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BLOCK 21

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant engages with a caregiver in play using farm animal figures.

Key Concepts
Farm animals

Play

Materials Needed
3–5 farm animal figures (see Be Prepared)

Basket (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently or with support. Use fewer or more animal figures if you anticipate the suggested 3–5 figures might be too many or too few for the infant. A possible source of farm animal figures is the Fisher-Price® Little People Farm Animal Friends. Place the animal figures in the basket.

Invite an infant to join you to play with farm animals. Sit across from the infant. Introduce the basket and invite the infant to look at what is inside the basket. Use the following to promote responsive play interactions with the infant:

- Support the infant as the leader of the play, including use of the play materials in his/her own way.
- Describe the infant's actions with animal figures. Examples: "You dumped the animals out of the basket! You are laughing, Kiara!" "You are holding up the pig. You are showing me the pink pig."
- Pause after you offer a comment, as you would in a conversation.
- Remember that your gestures and facial expressions are important ways to communicate with the infant. The infant will not understand many of your words.
- Watch closely for bids for your attention and respond promptly. Example: "You are giving me the yellow duck. I will play with the duck. The duck is going to jump around!"

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Your main task in each of these activity options is to watch the infant's responses to a picture (Option 1) or play material (Option 2) to determine how best to support the infant's interests. Observing carefully is essential to engaging in responsive interactions. Your interactions with the infant are the content of each activity. The pictures and materials are tools to facilitate interactions. The activities are not intended to teach about farm animals, although it is certainly appropriate to use an animal-like behavior, such as a pig's oink oink, to promote a playful exchange.

Look for natural places to pause in your talk. This gives space for the infant to contribute to the exchange. It also promotes a back-and-forth pattern that is common in responsive interactions. The infant's responses are likely to be nonverbal. Pause even if the infant does not respond.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ In Option 1, offer the infant a farm animal toy to hold while looking at pictures. ■ In the opening segment of Option 2, take an animal figure from the basket to manipulate and talk about if the infant does not pursue any of the toys initially.

Enrichment ■ Infants in Option 2 who are mostly interested in putting the animals in the basket and then taking them out may enjoy doing the same with a muffin pan. Invite the infant to place an animal figure in each cup of the muffin pan.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several books about farm animals, age-appropriate farm animal toys and figures, several baskets

Be Prepared: Create an area for infants to explore farm animals. Place the books close to baskets of animal toys and figures.

Provide opportunities for infants to look at pictures of farm animals in the books and to explore the farm animal toys and figures. Some infants may want to explore the animals' characteristics, whereas others may delight in dumping and filling. Talk with infants about their actions with the toys. Recognize all forms of interaction with the books and animals.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: two toy barns (cardboard boxes can be used in place of a barn if needed), farm animal figures appropriate for toddlers and preschool-age children, related play materials—such as fabric/felt pieces, people figures, tractors/trucks, or blocks

Consider creating two farm animal play areas, one for older infants and toddlers, and one for preschool-age children.

Pretend play with animal figures on a farm can be enjoyed by children of all ages. Provide frequent opportunities for children to engage in the open-ended play with animal and people figures. Adding new and interesting materials, such as fabric, can enhance children's play.

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BLOCK 21

Using Our Hands

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

A young infant adjusts to gentle movement in a caregiver's arms while listening to calm music.

Key Concepts
Move

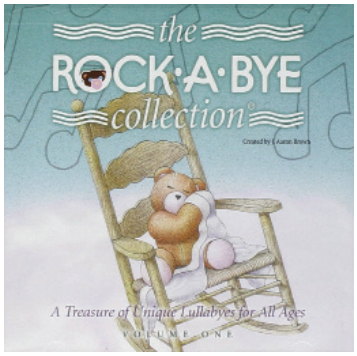
Calm

Materials Needed
The Rock-A-Bye Collection Vol I by J. Aaron Brown (audio CD)

Also Promotes
Self-Regulation

Cognitive

Be Prepared: This activity is for a nonmobile infant. Select one calm song from the recommended CD. Place the CD into the player so it is ready when an infant is alert and ready for some movement with you.



BEGIN: [*Pick up a nonmobile infant and greet him/her by name. Hold the infant securely in a comfortable position. Turn on the music at a medium-low volume.*]

EXPLAIN: We will move together to some calm music. I will hold you and we will move to the music.

ACT: [*Stand in one place with the infant securely in your arms and begin to shift your weight from one foot to the other in time with the music. Continue moving if the infant is content with your movements. Add extra steps and slow turns in rhythm with the music.*

Maintain good support for the infant's back, neck, and head as you move gently to the music. Continue to monitor the infant's reactions, especially muscle tension. Stop and adjust the way you are holding the infant if the infant begins to fuss or resist the movement by holding his/her body in a tense manner. End the activity if adjusting the infant's position is not satisfactory to the infant or you notice signs of distress. Describe the infant's reaction and your response. Example: "Joshua, I don't think you want to move to music. Let's figure out what will make you feel happier."]

RECAP: We heard some nice music. You could feel how I was moving you with our music.

What to Look For—Option 1

Generally young infants enjoy smooth movements, such as walking and rhythmic side-to-side steps. Pay careful attention to the infant's adjustment to moving while being held in your arms, as described in the activity plan. Your secure positions for holding an infant will differ across infants and will change with a specific infant as the infant develops greater strength.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

The experience of being carried in the arms of an adult (versus an infant carrier) is important in the infant's development of balance and upper body strength. Although you are providing physical support, the infant must engage the muscles of his/her torso and neck to keep the head erect. Adjusting to the gentle side-to-side movement is a developmental challenge for an infant similar to that of being carried upright. Also, the environment will look different for an infant from the vantage point of being held.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ As an alternative to carrying the infant, sit on the floor or in a chair with a nonmobile infant and sway to lullaby music.

Enrichment ■ As an infant develops greater strength, allow the infant to support his/her body by holding him/her facing out away from you.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

Infants participate in songs with hand motions led by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Sing
Hands
Move

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Self-Regulation
Cognitive

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who can sit independently or with support. Be familiar with the words, tune, and hand motions of two popular children's songs, such as "Wheels on the Bus" and "Itsy, Bitsy Spider." Sources are available online.

Sit on the floor with several infants for singing and hand movements. Explain that you are going to sing and move your hands. Sing a familiar song with corresponding hand motions. At the conclusion of the song, describe each infant's reaction. Example: "James, you watched me move my hands! You moved your hands, too!" Then repeat the song with hand actions or sing a second song with hand motions unless infants have lost interest. Encourage infants to move their hands, too. If the gathering includes an infant(s) who can stand without support, consider encouraging the infant(s) to stand for the second song and actions. An infant(s) who stands may bounce or move around a bit.

What to Look For—Option 2

The activity promotes an infant's motor skills related to balance and strength while in a sitting position. Some infants will imitate the hand or finger movements of a finger play, and others will enjoy watching you. Some infants may move their hands in random ways, and others may raise both arms. It is not necessary or appropriate to teach specific actions or to coax infants to move their hands or fingers. An infant who is just beginning to sit may lift one or both of his/her hands from the floor in order to move them during the song. Mobile infants may have the strength and balance to lift their arms while sitting and remain balanced. Moving hands or raising arms both represent adapting to a movement while remaining upright.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Move closer to an infant and place your hand on his/her shoulder or back to provide physical support. A gentle touch can be reassuring to an infant. ■ Place furnishings close to an infant to use as support while standing.

Enrichment ■ Copy and describe an infant's movements. Example: "Santiago is bending his knees and bouncing. I am going to bend my knees and bounce too."

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

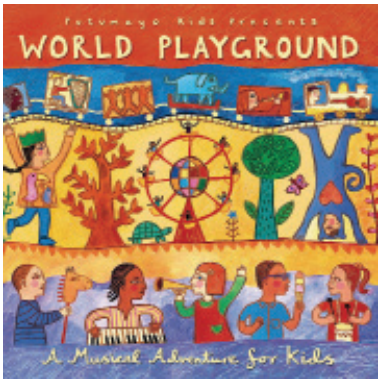
Older infants listen to music with the opportunity to move an object to a song.

Key Concepts
Move
Music
Arm

Materials Needed
World Playground by Putumayo Kids (Audio CD)
Objects to move—1 per infant and caregiver (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Self-Regulation
Cognitive

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who can sit or stand independently. Objects to move might include a shaker, bell, or scarf. Select two songs from the CD, one lively and one slower.



Invite mobile infants to join you to move our arms to music. Explain that each of us can hold something to move. Give each infant an object to hold before you start the recorded music. Play the livelier selection of music first. Kneel close to the infants and move your arm to the music by making side-to-side motions with one of the objects. Encourage infants to move their arms to the music. At the conclusion of the song, describe infants' actions. Then play the slower song and encourage infants to move their arm/object to the music. Demonstrate moving your arm gently back and forth with an object. If an infant(s) in your gathering can stand and remain balanced, consider inviting the infant(s) to stand and move an object with the slower song.

What to Look For—Option 3

Watch infants' movements so you can pace your arm movements to match their efforts. Repeated experiences are important to learning and infants may be more active with arm movements in the second music selection. Some infants may prefer to watch only, perhaps sitting close to you with or without an object to move. An infant who stands may remain in one spot to move an item or may move around on his/her feet. Enthusiastically acknowledge all types of participation.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Exaggerate your arm movements with the object you are holding. ■ Help an infant who is new to standing to move from sitting to standing or the reverse. ■ Demonstrate a way to move each of the different available objects, such as a scarf or bell, if infants seem interested in movement but unclear about what to do.

Enrichment ■ Move your arm in different patterns, such as in a circle, up and down, or side to side. Follow the music's tempo.

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Using Our Hands *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* by Annie Kubler, *Clap Hands* by Helen Oxenbury, *Everywhere Babies* by Susan Meyers, *Ten Tiny Toes* by Caroline Jayne Church, and sound makers

Display the suggested books. Sit with 1–2 infants to look at and talk about the pictures. Describe how each infant is moving. Provide easy access to sound makers so infants can extend Option 3 by making their own music with movements.

Family Child Care

Use care routines as opportunities to sing and move with young nonmobile infants. Infants will enjoy being part of an informal gathering with older children that includes singing and recorded music for movement. Invite toddlers to sit on the floor to sing "Row, Row Your Boat." Encourage toddlers to lean forward and back as you sing. Encourage preschool-age and older children to raise their arms one at a time while moving to music. Lead older children in a *Simon Says* type of game with movements that involve crossing one hand to the opposite knee and shoulder.

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BLOCK 22 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Sounds

Option 1 (OO) A young infant listens to a song while being gently rocked in a caregiver's arms.

Option 2 (OO) An infant listens to a song while being gently rocked in a caregiver's arms or rocking alongside a caregiver.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) An infant participates with a caregiver in open-ended play with two similar toys of different sizes.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant engages in guided play with different sizes of stacking rings.

Self-Regulation

Paying Attention

Option 1 (OO) A young infant focuses on a caregiver's finger actions during a rhyme.

Option 2 (OO) An infant focuses on a silly rhyme with corresponding finger actions.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in open-ended play with a familiar toy while a caregiver sits close by.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant participates in independent open-ended play with toys within view of a caregiver.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices reaching for a ball.

Option 2 (IG) Infants with early mobility participate in a guided activity of getting a ball.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants practice rolling a ball.

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

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BLOCK 22

Exploring Sounds

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

A young infant listens to a song while being gently rocked in a caregiver's arms.

Key Concepts
Song
Listen

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Cognitive

Optional Reading
Row, Row, Row Your Boat by Annie Kubler

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the lyrics and tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

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

I have a song to sing with you! We will move a little bit while I sing our song.

Our song is about a boat going down a stream. You can listen to me sing the words. We can move together during the song.

ACT: [*Make eye contact with the infant and sing the song slowly. Gently rock your body back and forth or from side to side with the infant securely in your arms.*

Watch the infant's reactions. Rock slower, or not at all, if the infant shows signs of distress.

After one round of the song, pause and describe the infant's reactions. Example: "You are smiling and cooing! I think you like listening and moving to this song."

If the infant remains engaged, repeat the song once or twice with rocking movement.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened. Example: "I sang a song about a boat. You listened to the words of the song. You smiled when we swayed back and forth. Thank you for letting me sing with you!"*]

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BLOCK 22

Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

An infant listens to a song while being gently rocked in a caregiver's arms or rocking alongside a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Song
Move

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Row, Row, Row Your Boat by Annie Kubler

Invite an infant to sit close to you or on your lap for a song. Explain that you are going to sing a song and we can move our bodies to the song. The song is about a boat floating on water. Demonstrate moving your upper body from side to side. Example: "Sometimes floating on water can feel like this."

With one arm around an infant sitting next to you or both arms around an infant sitting on your lap, sing one round of the song slowly while gently swaying your upper body. Watch the infant's reactions carefully and move slower or stop if the infant shows distress. After one round of the song with movement, pause and describe the infant's reactions. Example: "You are moving your head back and forth. I think you want to sing the song again!"

If the infant remains engaged, invite him/her to participate in a second round of the song. An infant sitting next to you might like to sway his/her body independently, without your arm around him/her. Sing the song again and gently sway your upper body, encouraging an infant sitting next to you to follow along. Infants may want to repeat the song and movement several times.

Recognize the infant's participation in the experience. Example: "You smiled while I sang our song. We moved our bodies from side to side. Thank you for helping me have fun with our song!"

What to Look For—Options 1–2

The activity options encourage a responsive and enjoyable song experience with an infant. In addition to hearing words and a tune, the infant experiences a corresponding body movement that will require some muscle accommodations. Most infants will enjoy the experience and likely ask for a repeat. Many infants may be familiar with the song, but may not have had the experience of body movements paired with the words.

Pay attention to an infant's muscle tension during the activity. Tightened muscles may mean the infant is not comfortable with the body movement. Reduce or stop your swaying actions, as suggested in activity plans. The song has benefit without the body movement.

Most infants will not have a mental image of a boat moving on water or understand most of the words in the song. The lyrics include phrases that make sense mostly to adults, such as "life is but a dream." The activity can be meaningful to an infant at a more general level, helping develop awareness of the concept of a song having words and a tune and sometimes movement of part of our body.

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Offer a gently swaying body movement first. You could say "sway" each time you move your body. Then offer the swaying movements with the song. ■ Humming the tune may help an infant pay attention to differences in sound.

Enrichment ■ For an older infant, show and describe in your own words selected pictures in the Optional Reading book.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: two large boxes or laundry baskets

Place the boxes in an open area for infants to explore during floor time. Sing songs that incorporate boxes, such as pretending the box is a bus and singing "Wheels on the Bus." Infants who can crawl or walk may enjoy climbing in and out of the boxes, crawling or walking around the boxes, or putting toys in and taking toys out. Describe infants' actions with the boxes.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several toy boats, water table

Older children will connect with the boat and rowing elements of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Invite older toddlers and preschool-age children to gently sway their bodies back and forth during the song. Older children may sing some of the familiar words with you. After the song, invite several older children to explore the toy boats in the water table. You may wish to softly sing the song while the children play.

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BLOCK 22

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An infant participates with a caregiver in open-ended play with two similar toys of different sizes.

Key Concepts
Big
Small

Materials Needed
2 soft toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently or with support. Secure two similar soft toys that clearly differ in size. The activity plan uses a large bear and a small bear.

Invite an infant to sit next to you on the floor. Hold the larger soft toy where the infant can see it. Speak clearly as you describe the toy and point to features you describe. Example: "This is a big bear. Here are the bear's eyes. Here is the bear's nose."

Encourage the infant to touch or hold the toy. Wait and observe the infant's reaction to the toy. Describe his/her actions. The infant may hug or pat the bear, put part of the bear to his/her mouth, and/or shake the toy.

Next, show the infant the smaller bear. Explain: "This is a small bear." Describe and point to the small bear's characteristics. Example: "Here are the small bear's eyes. Here is the small bear's nose." Hold the small bear within the infant's reach. If the infant is still holding the big bear, he/she may drop the big bear to hold the small bear or attempt to hold both bears.

Support the infant's play with one or both toys. Generally, infants are interested in pretend actions that represent familiar routines, such as feeding or sleeping. Engage in parallel play with a bear or serve as a helpmate for the infant's play with one or both bears. There will be an opportunity for you to hold a bear if the infant drops the big bear or hands a bear to you. Use the bear to participate in the play. Example: If the infant hands a bear to you, ask "Do you want me to play with the bear?" and wait for a nonverbal response, such as a look.

Describe the infant's actions with the toy(s). Also describe your actions. Example: "I am holding the small bear. I give her food. Yum, yum. The small bear likes this food." Describe characteristics of a toy that the infant is touching or looking at. Example: "Denari, you are touching the bear's nose. Now you are putting the bear's nose next to your nose!"

As part of the infant's play, point out differences between the two bears when appropriate. Examples: "You have the small bear. I have the big bear." "Do you want to play with the big bear now?" Use gestures to help communicate your meaning.

You might conclude your participation in the play by indicating it is time for your bear to go to sleep. Example: "Small bear is tired. Night night bear." Lay the bear on the floor and pat it with your hand.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

What to Look For—Option 1

This activity extends prior curriculum support for helping infants notice differences between objects, such as the Block 21 activity in which an infant is offered a choice between two toys. In the current activity, look for ways to point out differences between the two toys without turning the play into a teaching situation. Example: As part of the infant's interactions with the toys, there may be an opportunity to hold the two bears side by side to emphasize their differences in size. But avoid imposing this comparison on the infant's interests and actions.

More generally, watch for ways to support the infant's interests in the toy(s). Focus your attention on actions or toy characteristics that occupy the infant's attention. You may find a way to incorporate play with the bears into the infant's other interests. Example: If the infant crawls to a mirror, bring the toy bears to the mirror and playfully reintroduce the bears. If the infant ignores the toy bears, simply put the bears aside and focus on what the infant wants to do.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Assist the infant with challenging manipulations of the toys, such as trying to hold or hug both bears at the same time. ■ Acknowledge the infant's vocalizations.

Enrichment ■ Point to a bear's nose and ask "Where is your nose?" ■ While the infant is looking at you, point to your eyes and to the bear's eyes. Explain: "My eyes. The bear's eyes." ■ If an infant shows strong interest in a specific feature of a toy bear, such as its nose or ears, point out the difference in size of the feature on the two bears.

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BLOCK 22

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant engages in guided play with different sizes of stacking rings.

Key Concepts
Ring
On
Off
Big
Small

Materials Needed
Stacking rings toy

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Invite an infant to join you on the floor to play with stacking rings. Sit facing the infant and place the assembled stacking rings toy in front of the infant. Point to and name the rings, including the size differences. Example: "This is a ring. We have many rings. Some rings are big. Some rings are small." With hand gestures and a supportive facial expression, encourage the infant to remove the rings from the post. Emphasize that the infant is taking the rings off of the post.

Provide a minute or two for the infant to manipulate the rings, if interested. Then explain that you will line up the rings. Arrange the rings in a line with the largest ring on the infant's left side. The smallest ring will be the last in the line, on the far right. Describe what you are doing. After the rings are in a line, point to the largest ring and explain it is a big ring. Point to the smallest ring and explain it is a small ring.

Point to the largest ring and invite the infant to put it back on the post. Pause for the infant to respond. If the infant seems unclear about what to do, carefully put the largest ring on the post. Then remove it from the post so the infant can place the largest ring on the post. Emphasize that the infant is putting a ring on the post.

Encourage the infant to continue putting rings on the post, using the order in which they are placed on the floor. Offer guidance, if appropriate, by simply pointing to which ring goes on next. Emphasize again that the infant is putting rings on the post.

It is not necessary for the infant to place all rings on the post. Enthusiastically acknowledge the infant's efforts. Example: "Hurray for you, Max! You took all the rings off, and you put the big ring back on the post!"

What to Look For—Option 2

The activity provides a focused approach to supporting an infant's awareness of differences in the size of objects. Although a stacking rings toy is familiar to most infants, specific size differences are not obvious to many infants. The activity is more challenging than prior ELM activities on this topic, and should be offered to an older infant. In addition to intended cognitive benefits, the activity supports the fine motor skills involved in manipulating the rings.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

Because we read and write in English from the left side to the right, it is helpful for the infant to see objects arranged by size lined up in the same fashion. The activity is not intended to focus on specific differences in ring sizes. The visual display, from largest to smallest, is sufficient at this age. As infants become more familiar with the rings, their attention to size differences will increase.

Some infants may welcome your help in identifying the order of rings to be put on the post. You could take turns with the infant in putting a ring on the post. Other infants may be fine with your arrangement of rings by size on the floor and proceed in their own way. You may wish to simply observe. The common stacking rings toy has a post that is wider at the bottom. The rings will only fit onto the post in the correct order. This provides a self-correcting element for a child. There are stacking ring toys with a uniform-sized rod, allowing a child to stack rings out of order. This type of post supports mostly a fine motor skill, with minimal attention to size.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ In the opening segment of the activity, remove the first ring from the spool if the infant seems uncertain about your request to remove the rings. ■ A small encouragement to "put on one more" may help an infant to persist. Avoid coaxing an infant to finish and positively recognize any efforts.

Enrichment ■ Repeat the activity if the infant shows strong interest. This time, invite the infant to find the biggest and smallest rings as part of your lining up the rings by size.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: small toys, unbreakable jar, texture mat, pairs of toys made of different materials, open ball, cloth squares—such as a washcloth, silk fabric, denim, or corduroy

Place a few small toys inside an unbreakable jar. Infants who crawl will be pleased to find a toy inside a container and get it out. Place a texture mat on the floor and arrange no more than three infant toys for exploration.

In different areas of the room, arrange play materials that are similar but different in some important way, such as two balls of different sizes or animal figures made of different materials. Collect several cloth squares with different textures, such as a washcloth, a square of a light, silky fabric, and a square of denim or corduroy. Push the fabric into an open ball and encourage infants to feel the variety of soft textures. Some infants will be interested in removing the fabric. On another day, place several items of different shapes and textures into a basket for crawling and walking infants to explore.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: rattles, soft and hard objects, basket, animal and people figures, pairs of matching items

You may find time to present a rattle to an infant who is seated in a high chair before or after a meal or snack. Toddlers will enjoy exploring a variety of soft and hard objects in a basket. Provide soft and rigid animal and people figures. Talk with toddlers about similarities and differences. Preschool-age children may enjoy reaching into a bag and finding two matching objects using the sense of touch only. Items for the bag could include two small animal figures, two small blocks, two spoons, and/or two small socks.

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BLOCK 22

Paying Attention

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration

A young infant focuses on a caregiver's finger actions during a rhyme.

Key Concepts
Watch

Feet

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the "This Little Piggy" rhyme. Sources are available online.

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back and remove the infant's shoes, if necessary. You may wish to leave socks on the infant. Ensure the infant can clearly see you. Smile and make eye contact as you gently touch the infant's feet and toes.*]

These are your feet. These are your toes.

I am going to say a silly rhyme and touch your toes!

[*Display and move your fingers on one hand.*]

These are my fingers. I am going to use my fingers to touch your toes when I say our silly rhyme.

Are you ready?

ACT: [*Starting with one foot, gently touch each of the infant's toes while reciting the rhyme. Avoid grasping or pulling on the infant's toes. As the rhyme ends, gently walk your fingers up the infant's leg to his/her stomach. Avoid tickling the infant at any time during the activity.*

After reciting the rhyme with the first foot, pause and describe the infant's response. Examples: "You are looking at me! You laughed when I touched your toes. Would you like me to touch your other foot?" "You are moving your foot away. I don't think you want me to touch your toes. I will stop now. Let's find another activity."

If the infant remains interested, recite the rhyme with his/her second foot. Describe the infant's responses throughout the activity. Example: "You are watching me touch your feet. You are giggling. You are having fun with the silly rhyme!"

Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest, such as looking elsewhere or pulling his/her foot away.]

RECAP: [*Smile as you describe what happened. Example: "You watched me touch your feet. You laughed when the little piggy went all the way home! We had fun together."*]

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BLOCK 22

Paying Attention *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Concentration
An infant focuses on a silly rhyme with corresponding finger actions.

Key Concepts
Watch
Toes

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the "This Little Piggy" rhyme. Sources are available online.

Invite an infant to sit next to you or on your lap for a rhyme. If the infant is comfortable, remove his/her shoes and socks. Show and move your fingers. Point to and name the infant's toes. Explain that you are going to touch the infant's toes during our silly rhyme. Example: "These are your toes. I am going to touch your toes and say a silly rhyme! Are you ready?" Pause and acknowledge that the infant is ready. "You are wiggling your toes. You are smiling. I think you are ready for the rhyme!"

Begin reciting the rhyme, gently touching each of the infant's toes on one foot. Ensure you do not grasp, tickle, or pull on the infant's toes. As the rhyme ends, gently walk your finger up the infant's leg to his/her stomach. Avoid tickling the infant at any time during the activity. Pause after the first foot to acknowledge and describe the infant's reaction. Examples: "You watched me touch your toes. You smiled when the little piggy went all the way home. Would you like me to touch your other foot?" "I can see you are frowning. You do not like me touching your toes. I will hold you and say the rhyme without touching your toes." If the infant remains engaged, recite the rhyme with his/her second foot.

Conclude if the infant begins to lose interest. Acknowledge the infant's focus during the activity. Example: "We had fun with the little piggy rhyme, Matias. You listened to the rhyme. You watched me touch your toes. Thank you for playing with me."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Both activities encourage infants to focus on their feet and on your gentle touches of their feet. Ensure the activity is enjoyable for each infant. Avoid any touch that may be uncomfortable for the infant. Watch the infant's responses at all times during the activity and quickly make adjustments if there are signs of distress or dislike.

Young infants typically enjoy discovering their own feet and toes. Most infants will be delighted with the gentle touches and surprise ending of the rhyme. Infants who are familiar with the rhyme may anticipate the little piggy going "all the way home." Some infants may prefer to hear the rhyme without having their toes touched. You may wish to hold their feet gently yet firmly during the activity instead.

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Paying Attention *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ An infant may prefer to keep socks on. ■ Recite the rhyme slowly and quietly if you anticipate an infant may become overly excited during the rhyme. ■ Gently hug the infant at the end of the rhyme instead of walking your fingers up the infant's leg.

Enrichment ■ Vary your voice for each foot/set of toes by changing your tone, volume, and speed of words. ■ Invite the infant to touch his/her own toes during the activity.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several pieces of cloth with different textures

During floor time, invite one or several nearby infants to explore different cloth textures with their hands and feet. Cloth is a good material as it is unlikely to tickle the infants' feet. Help infants touch the cloth with their hands. Gently rub the cloth on infants' feet. Talk with infants about what they are feeling during the activity.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: large piece of paper, several crayons or markers in bright colors

Create a mural of the feet of children in your care. Invite each child to stand on the paper and help trace the outline of each foot. Older children may be able to trace their own feet and may enjoy helping trace the feet of their younger peers. Provide assistance for infants and toddlers to place their feet on the paper. Trace their feet quickly. Ensure there is little waiting by having supplies ready for several children to trace their feet at the same time. Write the names of children near their feet. Toddlers and older children may enjoy decorating their traced feet with crayons and markers. Display the mural for children and families to enjoy.

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BLOCK 22

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

A young infant participates in open-ended play with a familiar toy while a caregiver sits close by.

Key Concepts
Play

Materials Needed
Soft rattle or other favorite small toy

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back on the floor or in a comfortable and secure reclining position.*

Smile and begin talking with the infant. Example: "Hello, Josie! You had a nice nap. You are all rested. Would you like to play with a toy?"]

ACT: [*Hold the rattle or favorite toy about eight feet from the infant. Move it slightly from side to side, and then move it within reach of the infant's hand(s). Encourage the infant to hold the toy. Hold the toy if the infant wants to touch it but not grasp it. If the infant grasps and then drops the toy, pick it up for the infant. If the infant does not show interest in the toy, offer a different toy or close the activity and try again at another time.*

Remain close to the infant. Constantly watch his/her actions with the toy, and offer smiles. Continue to hold the toy for the infant if he/she wishes to touch it but not hold it. If the infant looks at you, acknowledge his visual contact. Example: "Hi, Sam. I am watching you play with your toy." Do not actively participate in the play unless the infant makes a bid for your involvement, such as reaching toward you or handing you the toy.

After 2–3 minutes, talk with the infant about his/her play. Participate if the infant seems interested in sharing with you.]

RECAP: [*Affirm the infant's exploration of the toy. Example: "You had fun playing with the rattle. You moved the rattle around. You put the rattle to your mouth. I watched you play with the toy. Now we can do something else."*]

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

An older infant participates in independent open-ended play with toys within view of a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Play
Blocks
Balls

Materials Needed
5 balls
5 blocks
2 baskets

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Cognitive

Be Prepared: This activity is for a mobile infant who can sit independently. Put the blocks in one basket and the balls in the other basket. Arrange the baskets in an activity space that can be used by an infant independently. Identify a location 6–8 feet from the activity space where you can be based during the infant's play and the infant can see you without any obstructions.

Invite an infant to play on the floor with the blocks and balls. Introduce the toys and encourage the infant to begin playing. The open-ended materials and containers provide a variety of ways for the infant to explore on his/her own. Once the infant is engaged with the toys, explain that you will be nearby while he/she plays for a short time. Point to or show the area where you will be located.

Maintain visual contact with the infant from your temporary location. If the infant carries toys to another area of the room, continue to maintain a distance of about 6–8 feet from the infant and watch his/her play. Go to the infant's play space after 3–4 minutes or at any sign of distress or fussiness. Affirm the infant's independent play when you return. Example: "You had fun playing with the blocks and balls! You played all by yourself! I watched what you were doing. You watched me to make sure I was close."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Both options support an infant's (a) trust in himself/herself to play without the minute-to-minute guidance of a caregiver, and (b) trust in his/her ability to secure a caregiver's attention if desired. The options are different than most other ELM activity plans in which the caregiver is an active guide. In the current plans, the caregiver is an active observer and fully available supporter if the infant needs help. Being physically present and attentive, but not highly talkative, is a valuable way to support close connections with a child.

In both options, an infant may check in with you by vocalizing, reaching toward you, or crawling or walking to you. Provide reassurance that you are watching and available. If an infant in Option 2 brings some of the toys to your "watch out" location (6–8 feet away), warmly acknowledge his/her presence and assume the behaviors recommended for Option 1. It is not necessary or appropriate to urge the infant to return to his/her play area. Follow the time parameters closely.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ If an infant in Option 2 does not look at or interact with the toys while you are 6–8 feet away, remind the infant you are watching him/her. Example: "Justin, I am watching you from here. I am close by." Provide a reassuring smile and eye contact every few moments while the infant plays. Shorten the amount of time for independent play if these strategies do not prompt the infant to engage with the materials.

Enrichment ■ In Option 2, replace the two containers with two muffin pans. The infant may like to place the balls and blocks into the muffin cups.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: ball and blocks, baskets or muffin pans

Provide additional opportunities for infants to independently explore the materials offered in Option 2. Arrange the toys and containers on the floor. You may wish to place a few toys in the containers or muffin pans to generate interest in the materials. Infants may enjoy exploring the toys individually, or they may practice filling and dumping the containers. Infants may enjoy watching their peers engage with the materials in similar ways. Describe infants' actions with the materials as they play.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: learning centers

Interesting and engaging learning centers are valuable resources for children to explore on their own. Provide daily opportunities for the children to play freely at learning centers while maintaining close proximity to provide support, reassurance, and prompts to extend play. Rotate items in the centers and include materials of interest to all children.

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BLOCK 22

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Fine motor development

A young infant practices reaching for a ball.

Key Concepts
Reach

Touch

Materials Needed
Small ball

Also Promotes
Cognitive

This brief activity is for a non-mobile infant. Place the infant on his/her back, and sit or kneel next to the infant's feet. Hold the ball about eight inches from the infant's chest. Talk with the infant as you slowly move the ball from side to side several times and then stop the ball at the midline. Lower the ball so the infant can touch it. Encourage the infant to touch or reach for the ball. Example: "Jacob, you see our ball. You are reaching your arms up to our pretty ball. I will move the ball so you can touch it." Support the infant's efforts to reach toward and touch the ball. If the infant grasps the ball, provide support for holding and feeling the ball. Avoid putting the ball in the infant's hands. Smile and describe the infant's actions. Conclude the activity when the infant loses interest.

What to Look For—Option 1

The activity is intended to foster coordination between seeing and reaching. In the opening segment of the activity, repeat slow movements of the ball from side to side if the infant shows signs he/she is enjoying looking at the ball, such as moving his/her head slightly as you move the ball to one side. Some infants may reach toward the ball with feet or hands. An infant may make swiping actions. An infant who rolls to his/her tummy may have the skills to raise head and torso and reach for the ball. If the infant moves to his/her tummy, place the ball in front of the infant for exploration. Keep the ball within the infant's reach if the ball rolls when the infant touches it.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ If the infant shows little interest in the ball, present a toy with a simple face.

Enrichment ■ Provide support for reaching in a different position. Hold the infant in your lap so his/her head and back are supported by your body. Hold a ball about eight inches from the infant and then move it closer to the infant so he/she has an opportunity to reach for it and touch it. Again, avoid putting the ball in the infant's hands unless he/she grasps it.

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BLOCK 22

Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

Infants with early mobility participate in a guided activity of getting a ball.

Key Concepts
Roll

Push

Materials Needed
Variety of small balls—1 per infant and caregiver

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

Self-Regulation

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who can creep on their tummy or crawl on hands and knees, and have the emerging skill to grasp a small item, such as a ball. Clear the activity space of materials so there is plenty of room for infants to move around. Use balls made for infants.

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor close to several infants. Place the balls in front of you.*]

Our balls can roll. Let's get the balls and play!

ACT: [*Invite infants by name to look at or move toward you and the balls. Example: (while holding up a ball) "Sonja, here is a bumpy ball."*

Gently roll balls toward specific infants. Push a ball with one finger. Example: "Our ball is rolling to you, Mateo." Rolling a ball slowly helps an infant focus his/her vision on the ball as it moves closer.

Describe infants' actions. Examples: "Lucy, you are sitting up with a ball that rolled close to you. You are tapping the ball with two hands!" "Yeah, Mateo! You crawled over to the ball. You pushed the ball with both hands. Oh, there it goes! It rolled to the chair."

Give little cheers and clap your hands to recognize infants' efforts. Use your voice to foster lively play.

Encourage individual infants to pursue their interests. Example: "All right, Christine! You turned around to go after a ball!"

Move closer to an infant who does not have a ball. Sit facing the infant and show him/her one ball. Ask "Are you ready?" When the infant reacts by looking, vocalizing, or gesturing, explain "I will roll a ball to you. Here it comes." Move the ball gently so it stops in front of the infant.]

RECAP: [*Use a calmer voice to close the activity. Stay with infants on the floor to support those who are excited or tired from the activity. Hold an infant who needs extra support for getting calm, or move next to two infants to give them reassuring touches. Give each infant a gentle touch on his/her back.*]

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

What to Look For—Option 2

You might think of the activity as "open gym time" for infants! It is an opportunity for infants to explore and practice important motor coordination skills, including the anticipation of reaching out to touch a ball moving in the infant's direction (motor planning).

Infants will participate in different ways: watching, holding a ball, reaching out to touch a ball, attempting to put a ball into his/her mouth, pushing a ball, following a ball by creeping or crawling. There will be differences in the use of one versus two hands. Some will focus on a ball, whereas others may be mostly interested in interaction with you.

Watch each infant's involvement to ensure there is engagement in the activity. In addition to actions suggested in the activity plan, there may be opportunities for you to foster reaching skills by placing a ball close to an infant who has learned to creep with his/her tummy on the floor. The desire to get ahold of the ball may generate keen interest. Creeping on the tummy toward a ball is fun for some infants. A lightweight ball will roll easily when a creeping infant touches it.

If an infant creeps or crawls to a ball and touches it, the ball may roll out of reach. Describe the situation and encourage him/her to persist in getting the ball. Assist the infant in getting the ball before the infant becomes discouraged or distressed.

Games or rules for ball play are not appropriate for the age of infants involved in the current activity. In general, the ability to roll a ball back to an adult develops around an infant's first birthday. Some infants may have the coordination to intentionally roll a ball by nine months.

Self-regulation skills are fostered in a lively play period with balls. Help infants who may get too excited during the play. Support for calming down may be needed at the conclusion of the play, as suggested in the activity description.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ An infant who is new to ball play may benefit from your gently handing a ball to him/her for exploration before then rolling the ball to the infant.

Enrichment ■ Show an infant how to use both hands to push a ball.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

Older infants practice rolling a ball.

Key Concepts
Roll

Push

Materials Needed
Small ball

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Self-Regulation

This activity is for infants who can walk. Invite two infants to play a game of rolling a ball back and forth. Demonstrate how to roll a ball by pushing it with two hands. Emphasize a slow roll. Some infants will be most comfortable sitting down to roll a ball back and forth.

There are several ways to arrange the activity. You may wish to support the two infants in rolling a ball between them. You may wish to roll a ball back and forth with each infant, one infant at a time, or be a third player in ball rolling.

Describe what is happening and help infants anticipate a ball coming their way. Examples: "Serena got the ball." "Here is a ball rolling to you, Robert." Positively recognize an infant's effort and persistence. Encourage infants to push the ball with two hands, whether they are sitting or standing. Examples: "Use both hands. Push the ball." "Great! You pushed the ball with both hands. It is rolling."

Sometimes a ball may roll past an infant and stop out of reach. The unreachable ball is a problem for the infant to solve. Offer time and encouragement. Point to a ball if it seems the infant is not clear on its location. Describe infants' actions. Examples: "You are watching our ball. You are pointing at the ball that rolled away. How can we get it?" "You are walking to the ball. You know how to get the ball!"

What to Look For—Option 3

The activity involves many motor coordination skills plus the logistics of ensuring each infant has good opportunity to participate. Keep a close eye on each infant's involvement so you can provide verbal guidance and hands-on help when needed. Helping an infant anticipate a ball coming his/her way is an important contribution. Be flexible about the activity so the infants' needs, rather than a desire to keep the ball rolling, are your primary focus.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ If you support two infants rolling a ball back and forth (versus you serving as a play partner), move around so you can coach each infant. It may be helpful to sit behind an infant when it is his/her turn to push a ball or to watch and capture a ball coming in his/her direction. ■ You may prefer to help one infant at a time practice rolling a ball.

Enrichment ■ Although a gentle, slow roll is appropriate for practicing how to roll a ball, infants' skill levels may support some variation in the speed at which a ball is rolled.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: balls, unbreakable bowl, laundry basket

For young infants who are beginning to lift their heads or learning to roll over, arrange colorful balls on the floor where they can see them. Place small (3–4 inch) balls in a unbreakable bowl for creeping and crawling infants to discover. Provide lightweight balls for crawling and walking infants. Place a laundry basket next to a wall and encourage walking infants to drop balls into the basket.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: balls

Introduce balls to infants when toddlers and preschool-age children are not present. Older children will not readily understand the reason for not throwing a ball to or at an infant. It is a good idea to have one ball for each child when playing with balls. Toddlers and preschool-age children typically enjoy lively interactions with a caregiver while playing with one ball for every child and caregiver. Ball games with teams and rules are not suggested for preschool-age children. Encourage older children to practice existing skills, such as throwing, catching, and bouncing.

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BLOCK 23 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Sounds

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in a book sharing focused on pictures and sounds of farm animals.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in a book sharing focused on pictures and sounds of farm animals, with opportunities to help turn the book's pages.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in a book sharing focused on pictures and sounds of farm animals, with opportunities to make animal sounds and help manage the book.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) A young infant looks at black and white images.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant looks at book pictures of ducks, with opportunities to notice details.

Self-Regulation

Getting Calm

Option 1 (OO) A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity with music and movement while held by a caregiver.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity of music and movement while standing and holding hands with a caregiver.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (IG) Young infants play with music toys, with caregiver support for noticing each other's play.

Option 2 (IG) Older infants paint with water in close proximity to each other, with caregiver support for noticing each other's activities.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants play side by side using the same materials, with caregiver support for peer interactions.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in 1–2 supported sitting positions.

Option 2 (OO) An infant participates in brief supported standing.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant practices pulling up to stand and walking.

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

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BLOCK 23

Exploring Sounds

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

A young infant participates in a book sharing focused on pictures and sounds of farm animals.

Key Concepts
Book
Listen
Look

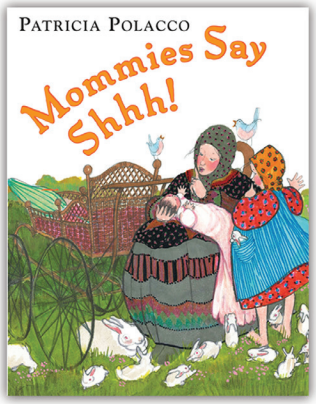
Materials Needed
Mommies Say Shhh! by Patricia Polacco

Also Promotes
Cognitive

BEGIN: [*Sit with the young infant reclined in your lap. Support the infant's head in the bend of your arm so your hands can hold the book and turn the pages while also securely holding the infant.*

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

I have a book for us to read together! Here is a picture of a mommy and little girl. They are saying "shhh."



[*Pause and watch for infant's response.*]

EXPLAIN: The mommy and little girl are part of a family. The family lives on a farm. The animals on the farm are noisy! Our book tells us about the different sounds that farm animals can make. We can listen to the animal sounds!

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

- *Use your own words to describe pictures. Point to things you describe. Emphasize the animal sounds. You may wish to repeat animal sounds. Example: "Look at all the birds! The birds are in the tree. Birds say 'cheep.' Let's listen to that bird sound again. 'Cheep. Cheep. Cheep.'"*
- *Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the cats. There are white cats, and black cats, and spotted cats! The cats are saying 'meow.' 'Meow, meow.'"*
- *Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations.*
- *Use your voice to add interest and enjoyment. Infants will delight in hearing the sounds of the animals and accentuated shhh!*
- *Transition out of the activity when the infant shows signs of disinterest.*]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened during the book sharing. Example: "We looked at pictures of farm animals. We listened to the sounds made by the animals. The animals were noisy. The mommy said 'shhh!' You liked the picture of the chickens. We pointed to the bunnies. You smiled and kicked your legs when I made a goat sound! This was a fun book!"*]

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BLOCK 23

Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

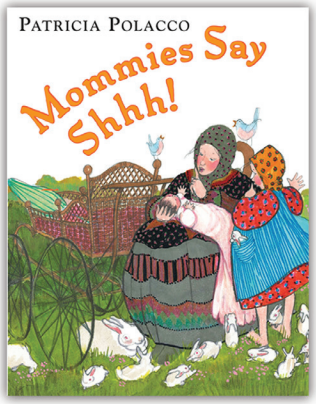
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

An infant participates in a book sharing focused on pictures and sounds of farm animals, with opportunities to help turn the book's pages.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Listen

Materials Needed
Mommies Say Shhh! by Patricia Polacco

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health



Invite an infant to sit on your lap to read a book. Introduce the book by pointing to the cover and describing the picture. Example: "This is a mommy, a baby, and a sister. They live on a farm with lots of noisy animals! Our book tells us about the sounds made by animals on the farm. We can listen to the sounds and talk about the pictures." Use the following strategies to engage the infant in the book:

- Invite the infant to help you turn pages of the book.
- Describe pictures in your own words. Point to and name the animals, people, and objects. Example: "These are sheep. The sheep are soft. Look, here is a bunny! I see a dog and a squirrel. There are a lot of animals in this picture!"
- Describe what the infant is looking at. Example: "You are looking at the geese. The geese are saying 'honk, honk!' The farmer is trying to drive his truck. The geese are on the road!"
- Spend more time talking about pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "The dogs are running. Look, their tongues are out! The dogs are barking. Do you see the squirrels? The dogs are chasing the squirrels!"
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You said, 'moo!' You know that cows say 'moo.' The cows in the picture are saying 'moo, moo!'"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "Look at the cats! You have a cat at your house! The cats in the book are saying 'meow.' What does your cat say?"
- Exaggerate the animal sounds and say them with enthusiasm.
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "We had fun reading this book together, Isaiah. You turned the pages! You helped me say 'moo' when we looked at the picture of the cows! The farm animals were noisy. The mommy said 'shhh!'"

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BLOCK 23

Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

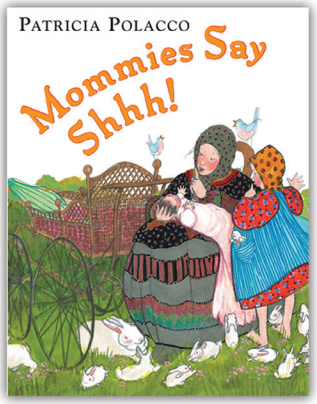
Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

An older infant participates in a book sharing focused on pictures and sounds of farm animals, with opportunities to make animal sounds and help manage the book.

Key Concepts
Book
Look
Listen

Materials Needed
Mommies Say Shhh! by Patricia Polacco

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health



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

Once the infant is comfortable and ready, point to the picture on the book cover. Example: "Look at the family in this picture. The mommy is saying 'shhh.' The family lives on a farm. There are noisy animals on the farm! Our book tells us about the animals and the sounds they make. You can listen to the animal sounds! You can help me make the animal sounds!"

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

- Describe pictures in your own words. Point to and name the animals, people, and objects. Example: "These are birds. The birds are in a tree! Look, there are squirrels in the tree, too. The girls on the swing are looking at the birds. The birds are singing! They are saying 'cheep, cheep.'"
- Emphasize the sounds made by animals with your voice and with repetition. Invite the infant to say the animal sounds with you. Example: "The pig is saying 'oink, oink, oink.' You can say 'oink, oink' with me! 'Oink, oink.'"
- Invite the infant to point to objects that you name. Example: "Look at the goats jumping and playing! I see a dog. Do you see the dog? You can point to the dog!"
- Spend more time on pictures that seem to be of particular interest to the infant. Example: "You are looking at the pigs. Pigs like to lay in the mud. Pigs get dirty! Look, this pig is playing with the children!"
- Describe and respond to gestures or vocalizations. Example: "You are pointing to the cat. You said 'meow!' You know that cats say 'meow.' I will say 'meow, meow' with you! 'Meow, meow!'"
- Help the infant connect book information to his/her own experiences and developing knowledge. Example: "The baby in our book is going to sleep. The mommy wants the animals to be quiet. She says 'shhh' to the animals. You have a baby at your house, Tameka. Do people ever say 'shhh' when your baby brother is sleeping?"
- Recognize the infant's participation in the book reading. Example: "You helped me hold our book and say animal noises, Destiny. You pointed to the ducks. You said 'quack, quack.' You liked the picture of the goats jumping and playing! You turned the pages to see what animals were next. We had fun reading this book together!"

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Infants enjoy looking at pictures of animals. The illustrations in this book are rich in detail and will require time to discuss with an infant who shows interest in a specific picture. Point generously and use short sentences. Infants will not understand most of the words you say, but pointing to and saying the names of objects and actions can help develop an infant's vocabulary awareness. Encouraging infants to imitate animal sounds can support awareness of differences in sounds. Older infants may enjoy saying the name (or part of the name) of a familiar animal.

Younger infants may focus on one animal in a picture. Older infants may enjoy exploring some of the details of the pictures, such as the bunnies in the dress pockets or the activities of the animals in the background. There is no need to look at and talk about each picture. Follow the infant's cues regarding the amount of book sharing that is of interest. If the infant appears to be losing interest, you may wish to skip to the last page in the book where the mommy says 'shhh!' to all the noisy animals.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ In Option 1, provide a farm animal toy for an infant to hold during the book sharing.

Enrichment ■ Invite an infant to find an animal shown repeatedly in pictures. Example: Bunnies can be found in almost every picture in the book. "There is a bunny in this picture! Can you find a bunny?" ■ Point to each animal in the picture near the end of the book and say animal sounds. Invite the infant to say some of the sounds with you.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several books with pictures of farm animals, assortment of familiar farm animal figures in a basket

Infants enjoy interacting with toy animals. Provide the farm animal books and basket of farm animals for infants to explore during floor time. Look at the pictures with infants and encourage them to help you find the corresponding animals in the basket. Say the animal sound for each animal an infant touches or picks up. Invite older infants to say the animal sounds with you or by themselves.

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Mommies Say Shhh!* by Patricia Polacco

This book will appeal to children of many ages. Older children may enjoy describing some of the details of the richly-illustrated pictures. Infants may enjoy holding a farm animal figure or stuffed animal during a book sharing. After the book, encourage children to join you in singing "Old MacDonald Had a Farm." Invite toddlers and older children to take turns selecting an animal to sing about.

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BLOCK 23

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

A young infant looks at black and white images.

Key Concepts
Picture

Materials Needed
*High-contrast art cards

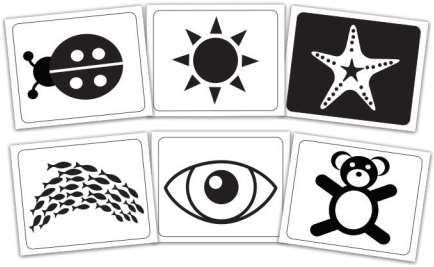
Also Promotes
Communication/Language

*Printables provided

Optional Reading
Hello, Animals! by Smriti Prasadam

Hold a nonmobile infant on your lap. Present three to four cards, one at a time. Hold each card for about 10 seconds. Describe each image as the infant gazes at it. Talk as if you are in a conversation with the infant. Example: "Kyle, I think you like the eye picture. This picture is made with lines and dots."

If the infant appears especially interested in an image, hold it until the infant looks away. If the infant reaches for a card, move it close so the infant may touch the card. Repeat an infant's vocalization, including a coo.



What to Look For—Option 1

Before seven or eight months, most infants see between eight and fourteen inches away.

Simple shapes in black and white or another bold color on a contrasting background are interesting to infants in the first few months of life. Looking at high-contrast images can help an infant develop eye control, visual preference, and visual acuity.

The activity description suggests that you talk with the infant as if you are having a conversation. This suggestion is consistent with the serve-and-return concept described in the *ELM Curriculum User Guide* for infants and toddlers. The infant may serve a "coo" and you can return with an imitation of the "coo." When you serve, such as pointing to a part of a picture as you describe it, the infant's return will most likely be non-verbal.

If the infant becomes fussy, reposition him/her and return to the picture activity. Some infants may calm down and again focus on images. Pay attention to the infant's body tension and sounds. You may wish to postpone the activity until the infant's next alert cycle. Sometimes an infant needs comfort or movement rather than visual stimulation.

Elm Early Learning Matters

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Jiggle the card gently to encourage the infant to look at it. ■ An infant may prefer to look at the cards while you stand holding him/her. Set the cards upright against a wall, such as on the top of a coat cubby.

Enrichment ■ Support the infant's visual tracking by slowly moving one card side to side. ■ On another day, share pictures in the Optional Reading book suggestion.

Option 1 is informed by the following source: Perone, S., & Spencer, J. P. (2013). Autonomy in action: Linking the act of looking to memory formation in infancy via dynamic neural fields. *Cognitive Science*, *37*, 1–60.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

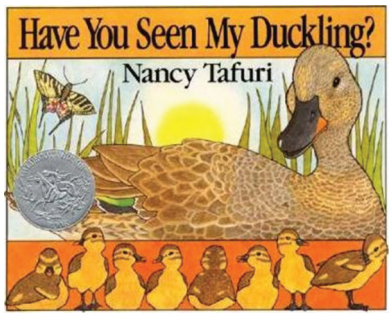
Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant looks at book pictures of ducks, with opportunities to notice details.

Key Concepts
Look
Little
Big

Materials Needed
Have You Seen My Duckling? by Nancy Tafuri

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Self-Regulation



Sit on the floor next to a mobile infant and invite him/her to join you in looking at pictures in the board book. The book offers attractive drawings of a mother duck and eight baby ducks.

Help the infant look at the book pictures in ways that can strengthen his/her skills in looking. For some infants, or on some pages, this will mean focusing on details of a picture. For other infants, or on some pages, this will mean looking at and talking about the dominant image on the page and giving little or no attention to other parts of the picture. No two sessions with infants will be alike. Infants differ in visual skills generally and will likely differ in their interest in the specific pictures offered in this book.

Use your own words to describe pictures. Point to aspects of a picture that you describe. On each page, point out little ducks and big duck. Emphasize little and big. If the infant is very focused on the pictures, draw attention to some details. Examples of details to highlight include the following:

- beaver swimming
- frog jumping
- salamander swimming
- turtle finding

Focus on picture details related to the story's plot, such as the turtle finding the lost little duck. If the infant shows interest in the book's story, point out images of the little duck separated from its group.

Encourage the infant to point to specific aspects of pictures, such as little ducks in the nest. Example: "Let's look for the little ducks and the big, mommy duck."

Talk about images the infant may point to. Example: If the infant points to a baby duck swimming, respond with a comment, such as "Little duck is in the water."

What to Look For—Option 2

This is an appropriate book for helping an infant look closely at pictures because there are few words and the storyline is simple. Infants will differ in their level of interest in picture details, as described in the activity plan. Some infants will be pleased to look at the primary images and will enjoy the refrain: "Have you seen my duckling?" Look for opportunities to emphasize the concepts of big and little. Pointing is especially important because infants

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

are unlikely to understand many of the words you say. The activity plan describes images that can be emphasized with an infant who shows interest in picture details.

Paying attention to picture details is enhanced in repeated sessions with the book. Recall your experience rereading a favorite book or watching a movie for the second time. Most likely there were details you missed the first time. Young children similarly begin to observe more visual details when they have a second or third session with a book.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Consider using the phrase "baby duck" rather than duckling unless the infant understands, or is ready to understand, that a duckling is a baby duck. This activity focuses more on looking closely at picture images than strengthening an infant's knowledge of ducks. ■ If the infant stands and walks away, invite him/her back for one more page. ■ If an infant wants to stand, place the book on a low surface, such as a cube chair.

Enrichment ■ Encourage the infant to turn the pages. ■ Help the infant place the book on the bookshelf or into the book basket at the conclusion of the session.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: black construction paper, white paper, glue, black and white mobile, *Big Fish Little Fish* by Fhiona Galloway, *Have You Seen My Duckling?* by Nancy Tafuri, cloth fish, toy ducks of two sizes, basket, colored cellophane

Create a looking center in a small space that infants and caregivers can visit during the day. Fasten two sheets of black construction paper to the wall. Cut a simple shape from white paper and glue it to the first black sheet. Identify a white object to place in front of the other black paper. Hang a mobile made of black and white items.

Place the book, *Big Fish Little Fish* by Fhiona Galloway, in a basket with cloth fish for crawling infants to discover. On another day, place toy ducks in the basket with the book, *Have You Seen My Duckling?*

Provide duck toys in two sizes for infants to explore. During playtime, retell the story using the toys or a puppet. Display related items the infants can identify as big or little. Put some colored cellophane on a window, out of reach of infants, and lift the infant to look through it.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: see below

In addition to the book suggested in Option 2 for infants, consider offering books that can promote older children's attention to details in pictures. Books with visual clues are fun for preschool-age children, as they can anticipate what happens next. Two possibilities are *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins, and *The Mitten* by Jan Brett. Older children may enjoy identifying letters or numerals in books, such as *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin and *Three Little Mermaids* by Marva VanFleet.

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BLOCK 23

Getting Calm

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-control

A young infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity with music and movement while held by a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Calm

Materials Needed
Music player with lively instrumental music

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

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

ASK: Are you ready for some music?

[*Pause and acknowledge the infant's response. Example: "You are looking at me. I think you are ready to listen to the music. Let's move a little bit while we listen."*]

ACT: [*Play lively instrumental music and gently move your arms up and down to create a light bouncing motion. The infant's head should never leave the bend of your arm. Hold the infant securely at all times. Smile and make eye contact with the infant. If he/she seems to be enjoying the movement, gradually increase the amount of movement.*

Watch the infant's reactions to the music and movement closely. Decrease the movement or stop the music if the infant tightens his/her muscles, frowns, or appears at all distressed. You may wish to play the music without the movement or continue gentle movements without the music. Talk with the infant about his/her reaction. Examples: "What a big smile you have! You like moving to the music!" "You are making a sad face. I think you are feeling unhappy. Let's stop the music. We will find a way to feel calm."

After listening and moving to the music for several minutes, turn off the music and encourage the infant to become calm. Announce that the music is over. Example: "The music is all done. We can calm down now." Reposition the infant to provide another clear signal that the activity is over. Hold the infant and provide comfort, such as patting on the back, quietly singing a familiar song, or offering soft-voice reminders that it is time to rest.]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact as you describe what happened. Examples: "We had fun moving with the music, Hailey! You had a big smile. Then the music stopped. I held you while you got calm again."*]

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BLOCK 23

Getting Calm *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Self-Control

An older infant practices calming down after a mildly stimulating activity of music and movement while standing and holding hands with a caregiver.

Key Concepts
Music

Calm

Materials Needed
Music player with lively instrumental music

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Invite an infant to join you for a music activity. Kneel facing the infant (within reach of the music player) and invite him/her to stand up while holding both of your hands. If the infant appears unsure of his/her position, you may wish to place your arms firmly around his/her waist during the activity instead. Make eye contact and ensure the infant feels secure and ready for the activity. Example: "We are going to listen to music and you can dance! Are you ready?" Begin playing the music and demonstrate bouncing or "dancing" by gently moving your upper body and arms up and down. Smile and encourage the infant to do the same with his/her body. Many mobile infants will naturally begin to move their heads and bodies with the music, whereas others may benefit from additional verbal and/or physical support. If the infant shows signs of disinterest or distress at any time, modify or end the activity. Talk with the infant about his/her response to the music and movement. Examples: "You had fun dancing with the music, Talia!" "You didn't feel like dancing today, Evan. You enjoyed sitting and listening to the music instead."

After the music and movement, invite the infant to sit and rest with you. The infant may want to sit near you or on your lap. Provide quiet time for the infant to calm him/herself. If needed, support the infant by patting his/her back, quietly humming or singing a favorite song, or offering gentle reminders that it is time to rest. Recognize and acknowledge the infant's behavior as he/she becomes calm after the activity. Example: "You had fun moving your body with the music. Now you are sitting with me and resting. We are feeling calm."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Both activity options support infants in learning that they can be excited during fun activities and also be able to return to a calm state. A young infant may signal he/she would like to continue listening to the music by smiling and making eye contact with you, kicking legs, cooing, or laughing. Older infants may be aware of the idea of dancing to music and will enjoy moving their body up and down or perhaps from side to side. Watching closely for, and promptly responding to, indications of disinterest or distress are important parts of your role. Remember that distress may be shown through tightened muscles, which can be readily detected in Option 1. Your attentiveness to infants' calming-down behaviors is also key to the success of the activities. In Option 2 especially, some infants may move toward a calm state independently with your indication that it is time to stop the music and dancing. Others may need additional support to become calm.

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Getting Calm *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ If an infant needs extra support to become calm, consider playing slower, soothing music as you hold him/her. Nature sounds, such as waves or gentle rain, may be calming for an infant.

Enrichment ■ Invite two infants to join you in Option 2. Encourage the infants to notice each other calming down.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: music player with lively and soft music

Play lively music and invite several infants to dance as they wish with the music. Some infants may stand and bounce, whereas younger infants may bob their heads and upper bodies. Encourage the infants to calm down after the exciting activity using one or more of the strategies offered in the activity options.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: music player with lively music

Children of all ages enjoy moving their bodies to music. Invite children to play a stop-and-go game with lively music. Encourage children to dance in ways they wish while the music is playing and to stop when the music stops. Older children can model how to dance and then stop. Young toddlers will enjoy participating with their older peers. Young infants may join the activity by being held by an adult who gently moves and then freezes at the appropriate times. Encourage all children to rest and sit quietly for a few moments before moving to the next activity.

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BLOCK 23

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Young infants play with music toys, with caregiver support for noticing each other's play.

Key Concepts
Play
Sound

Materials Needed
Four different music toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Select colorful toys that make a sound when shaken, such as Hohner® Kids Musical Toys Baby Band.

BEGIN: [*Place two alert infants on their tummies, facing one another. Show one toy. Shake it gently in front of the infants to encourage interest.*]

I have some music toys! Look at this toy. Can you hear the sound it makes?

Would you like to play with the music toys?

ACT: [*Arrange the four toys between the infants, close enough for each infant to reach. Encourage each infant to reach for and grasp a toy.*

Comment on any infant signs of interest in the toys, such as gazing at the toy, vocalizing, kicking legs, or reaching toward the toy.

As the infants explore, use gestures and words to encourage their awareness of one another's actions with the music toys. Examples: "Asia is holding the bell. Do you hear the sound of the bell?" "Look, Asia, Cole is playing with the red shaker toy! Shake, shake, shake, Cole!"

Draw attention to an infant's interest in another infant's actions. Example: "Cole, you are watching Asia play. You are smiling! You like to watch Asia play."

Remember that young infants will explore toys with their mouths as well as their hands.

Watch the infants' reactions to being on their tummies. Some infants may tire of this position sooner than others. Wrap up the activity if either infant signals discomfort or fussiness.]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe highlights of the interaction, particularly any awareness or positive responses to one another. Example: "Asia and Cole, you played with the music toys. Asia played with the bell. Cole liked the shaker toy. Cole, you watched and smiled at Asia! You had fun playing together."*]

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BLOCK 23

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Older infants paint with water in close proximity to each other, with caregiver support for noticing each other's activities.

Key Concepts
Paint
Brush
Paper

Materials Needed
3 chunky paintbrushes
Colored construction paper (avoid black and white)
3 trays (see Be Prepared)
Cup

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for two infants who can sit independently. Place one sheet of construction paper on each tray with a paintbrush. Two of the trays are for the infants (one tray each), and one tray is for you. Arrange the trays close together on the floor. This activity may take place at a low table if each infant can sit on a chair independently. Fill the cup with water and place nearby. The cup of water will remain with you throughout the activity.

Invite two infants who can sit independently to join you on the floor to paint with water. Demonstrate how to use the brush by dipping your brush into the water and then making marks on the construction paper with the wet paintbrush. Your demonstration is intended to encourage infants' explorations with the materials and not as directions for infants to follow. Infants are not expected to use the paintbrush correctly or to create an actual art piece.

Name and point to a brush, paper, and bristles. Encourage infants to touch the bristles of the brush. Using a paintbrush may be new for some infants.

Invite the infants to wet their brushes. Some infants may dip their brushes into the cup that you are holding. Others may need you to wet their brushes for them.

Use the following strategies to encourage infants' awareness of their peer's activities:

- Frequently describe each infant's actions. Example: "Terrell is holding his brush and touching the bristles."
- Encourage the infants to watch one another's actions with the materials. Example: "Look, Terrell, your friend Makayla is using her brush to make marks on her paper! Makayla is painting with her brush."
- Watch for and reinforce any awareness of, or positive responses toward, one another. Examples: "Makayla, you are watching Terrell touch the bristles on his paintbrush. You are touching the bristles on your paint brush! You are watching Terrell and doing the same." "You are smiling at Makayla, Terrell! You see Makayla painting with her brush."

Encourage infants to wet their brushes frequently. Water on the bristles can dry quickly.

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BLOCK 23

Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Older infants play side by side using the same materials, with caregiver support for peer interactions.

Key Concepts
Stick

Together

Materials Needed
Large piece of contact paper

Duct tape

Materials to affix to contact paper (see Be Prepared)

Basket

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Select colorful materials to affix to the contact paper, such as the following: large paper shapes, tissue paper squares, feathers, short strips of wide ribbon, large craft pom-poms. Place items in the basket. Use duct tape to affix the large piece of contact paper low on a wall, sticky side out. Ensure the contact paper is low enough for an infant to reach it by sitting or standing. Place the basket of materials on the floor near the contact paper. The emphasis of this activity is for infants to interact while exploring the same interesting materials. Infants are not expected to create an actual art piece.

Invite two infants who can sit or stand independently to join you in front of the contact paper. The infants may want to stand or sit during the activity. Encourage the infants to explore the materials. Infants may enjoy touching the sticky contact paper and searching through the items in the basket. Demonstrate how the items in the basket can stick to the contact paper on the wall. Invite the infants to choose items from the basket to stick to the wall.

As the infants explore the materials side by side, use the following strategies to support interactions between them:

- Encourage the infants to become aware of one another's actions with the materials. Example: "Look, Tyler is sticking yellow and purple tissue paper on the wall. The tissue paper looks pretty. What do you think, Elena?"
- Provide prompts to encourage the infants to consider one another's actions as they interact with the materials. Example: "Elena is sticking a blue ribbon to the wall. What are you going to stick on the wall next, Tyler? Maybe you can stick your item by Elena's blue ribbon!"
- Reinforce any positive responses to one another. Example: "Elena, you watched Tyler stick a yellow circle on the wall. Now you are sticking a green triangle next to Tyler's circle."
- Use words that encourage social interaction, such as "together" and "friend." Example: "Look at your wall, Elena and Tyler! You worked together to stick things on the wall. You are good friends."

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Each of the activity options promotes infants' beginning awareness of, and interest in, peers. Watch for the infants to show interest in their peers by gazing at, turning toward, or imitating their peers' actions with the materials. Recognize and reinforce any positive responses to peers that you observe. Some infants may readily watch and imitate their peers' actions, whereas others may focus more on their own exploration of the materials. Remember to focus on the reactions of the infants to one another during the activities, rather than how the activities are carried out.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ If an infant does not enjoy playing while on his/her tummy in Option 1, try the activity with two infants side by side while sitting with support. ■ In Option 2, infants may prefer to use their hand(s) to make marks on the paper if the use of a brush is too challenging. Invite the infant to place his/her hand, palm down, in a bowl of water, and then place his/her hand on the paper to see what happens. ■ Use 1–2 different items in Option 3 if you anticipate the range of suggested materials may be overstimulating.

Enrichment ■ As a follow-up to using brushes in Option 2, provide a sponge for each infant to use in making water marks on paper. ■ Infants in Option 3 may enjoy additional exploration of the contact paper. Invite walking infants to walk barefoot on contact paper affixed to the floor. Take a board with contact paper attached outdoors and invite infants to find nature items to stick on the paper.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several strips of contact paper

Extend Option 3 by placing strips of contact paper in your room's play settings for infants to explore. Place paper on the floor for young infants to touch during tummy time. Longer strips on the floor can be enjoyed by mobile infants walking and crawling across the sticky surface. Contact paper on the wall can be discovered by sitting and mobile infants. Encourage infants to become aware of the actions of one another as they explore the sticky paper.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: several strips of contact paper, wall collage materials (such as large paper shapes, tissue paper squares, feathers, short strips of wide ribbon, large craft pom-poms), nature collage materials (such as grass, leaves, small stones, nuts, small sticks)

Children of different ages in your setting can enjoy exploring and discovering the characteristics of contact paper. Contact paper affixed low on a wall can become a collage using materials suggested above. Contact paper can be affixed to the floor for infants, toddlers, and older children to explore. Take contact paper outdoors and invite the children to find nature items to stick to the paper. Encourage and reinforce positive interactions between peers as they explore the materials.

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BLOCK 23

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

A young infant participates in 1–2 supported sitting positions.

Key Concepts
Sit

Materials Needed
1 small toy

I See by Helen Oxenbury (Extra Support tip)

Baby Touch and Feel: Cuddly Animals by DK Publishing (Extra Support tip)

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Be Prepared: This activity is designed to strengthen skills that lead to sitting without support. It is for an infant who can hold his/her head steady in an upright position and is progressing toward sitting without support.

BEGIN: [*Greet the infant by name and lift him/her under the arms with support on the torso. Make sure the infant can lift his/her head. If needed, support the head with one hand behind the infant's neck. Do not allow the infant's head to drop backwards. Do not pull an infant into a sitting position by holding only the hands or arms.*

Select an area of your room where there are toys and/or other infants to see. Have the toy nearby. Sit on the floor with your legs crossed and place the infant between your lower and upper legs. His/her back will be supported by leaning on you. Give the infant time to adjust to looking around. Sitting upright generally increases an infant's attention to people and objects in the environment.]

ACT: Hi, (infant's name). Let's sit together and watch our friends play (or look at a toy).

[*Describe what the infant is looking at.*

After one or two minutes, or when the infant seems to become restless, reposition the infant into one of the sitting positions described below. Explain that we are going to try sitting a different way.

- *Straighten your legs and lower the infant so he/she is sitting on the floor while still getting support from your legs and hands.*
- *Place the infant on your lap, facing you, on the floor or in an adult chair. Maintain needed support by keeping both of your hands on the infant's torso.*
- *Place the infant on your lap, facing out, on the floor or in an adult chair. Hold the infant around his/her chest with one arm.*

Offer a toy to the infant if he/she seems interested. Continue to talk with the infant about what he/she is looking at or manipulating with his/her hands. Pause in your talk so there's an opportunity for the infant to contribute. The infant's contribution to the exchange may be a look, smile, body movement, or vocalization.

One or two minutes in one or two sitting positions is sufficient.]

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

RECAP: [*Speak clearly as you summarize what happened. Example: "You are practicing how to sit by yourself. You looked at other children and adults in our room. You held a toy. We talked about the toy."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

It is helpful for the infant to experience sitting with your support in several different positions. Each position requires some minor adjustments on the infant's part. Pay close attention to facial expressions and/or sustained muscle tightening that may indicate the infant would not welcome an additional supported sitting position in this activity.

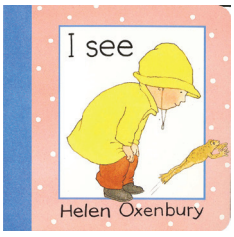
Infants often put one or both hands out to help stabilize the torso when they are learning to sit without support. This is sometimes referred to as tripod sitting. Your physical closeness and supervision are needed for safety and support. Generally, infants feel most secure when a familiar caregiver provides emotional nurturance and stays close.

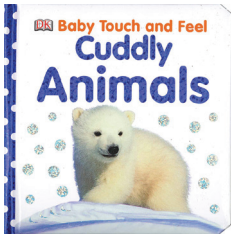
Many infants develop an ability to sit without support about six to seven months of age, but this skill can occur sooner or later. Sitting without support is achieved following important gains in muscle strength and head control. Regular tummy time activities and being held or carried in an upright position foster this gross motor development. Infants also develop essential body coordination and strength through moving freely on the floor during supervised play periods.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Look at and talk about pictures in a board book when the infant is facing out (see Materials Needed). ■ Repeat the supported sitting activity daily throughout the following weeks.

Enrichment ■ For an infant who has some control of his/her torso, neck and head, hold the infant on your lap with your legs together and stretched out on the floor. Move your legs side to side slowly, holding onto the infant at all times.





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BLOCK 23

Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An infant participates in brief supported standing.

Key Concepts
Stand

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit without support and is ready to bear weight on his/her feet for a few seconds at a time.

Sit on the floor facing the infant. Encourage the infant to stand with your help. Use both hands to hold the infant's torso and help him/her stand for a few seconds. Next, assist the infant in sitting down again. Do not lift or lower an infant by the arms. Repeat the sequence several times if the infant enjoys it! Do not hold the infant in a standing position any longer than he/she wishes.

What to Look For—Option 2

Pay careful attention to the infant's reactions to supported standing. The infant's developmental level and desire to bear weight on his/her legs will determine the number of times the infant practices standing up briefly with your support. Do not offer more standing practices unless the infant seems interested. Some infants may enjoy bouncing themselves in a standing position. Do not let go of the infant during any part of standing, and be sure to support the infant as he/she sits down.

Developing strength in the legs and becoming accustomed to bearing weight on the feet requires many repeated experiences, often beginning around six or seven months of age. Week by week infants gradually increase the amount of weight they bear in an upright position. Offer opportunities for supported standing each day during playtimes when the infant is interested, keeping in mind there is no need to rush development.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Provide ample rest time between standing practices. ■ Gradually reduce the amount of support you provide to the infant without taking your hands off of the infant's torso.

Enrichment ■ After several times of standing briefly while facing you, help the infant bear weight on his/her feet while looking out into the room. Give verbal assurances you are still close. Explain that the infant is looking at different things, but do not provide descriptions that sustain the standing time beyond what is comfortable for the infant.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An older infant practices pulling up to stand and walking.

Key Concepts
Stand

Walk

Materials Needed
Cube chair or other secure object for infant to hold

Several attractive toys

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Be Prepared: This activity option is for an infant who is beginning to pull himself/herself to a standing position, or an infant who is beginning to walk. These two skills are sequenced. Skill in pulling up to stand comes before skill in walking.

To support an infant who has begun to pull himself/herself to a standing position, arrange several small toys on a low surface, such as a cube chair, that the infant can manipulate while standing. Invite an infant to explore the play materials. Kneel next to the infant and talk with him/her about how he moved from creeping or crawling position to standing. Join the infant in playing with the toys.

To support an infant who is ready to walk, kneel in front of the infant and offer your hands as support. Some infants are able to walk by holding an adult's finger. Infants need their arms for balance. Encourage infants to walk a few steps to you and praise their accomplishment! Walking behind an infant and holding both arms up is not recommended.

Infants often fall frequently while learning to walk. Stay close to a walking infant to offer a safe way to fall. Encourage the infant to bend his/her knees and sit down if balance becomes unsteady. Keep play areas clear of play materials to allow infants to move without obstacles.

What to Look For—Option 3

Pulling up to stand strengthens an infant's hips, knees, and ankle muscles, and improves balance. Once an infant is able to balance, he/she will generally begin taking sideways steps, technically known as cruising. Infants first learn to pull themselves up to stand around eight to ten months.

Learning to walk increases access to objects and gives an infant a new view of the environment. Beginning walking is an exhilarating time for infants, but it can also be a time of some unease. Some infants are excited to walk and may resist sleep. Infants often need a little extra nurturing care and reassurance during this time of change. You may see an infant practice walking steps and then revert to crawling until the walking skill is refined.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ Arrange furnishings and play materials so an infant can repeat the actions of standing many times during a day.

Enrichment ■ Arrange furnishings for an infant to be able to explore taking several side-to-side steps (cruising).

Interest Area

Materials Needed: Water mat, books, mats, animal and people figures or infant vehicles, textured materials

Arrange a variety of toys to create stimulating play spaces on the floor for infants who are learning to roll over. Supervise all tummy-time play.

Foster existing skills in sitting and crawling by placing a water-mat toy on the floor. Infants will enjoy pushing on the mat and watching the toys inside move as they sit. Arrange several opened books for crawling infants to see. Creeping infants may enjoy looking at the books as they lie on the floor. Small toys infants can grasp and explore can be organized in two places for early mobile infants to discover.

Rotate some play materials and display toys on the floor and on raised surfaces, such as mats for mobile infants. Depending upon the infants' interests, display animal figures, people figures, or infant vehicles. Infants who can pull up to stand and walk will enjoy touching textured materials displayed on low surfaces. Provide infant books in baskets or displayed on low surfaces.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: paper, freezer bag, paint, tape, paper moon, *Round is a Mooncake* by Grace Lin, *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown, *Peek-a-Boo Moon* by Parragon Books

For infants who are creeping or crawling on hands and knees, prepare a mess-free painting activity. Place a sheet of paper in a clear freezer bag. Add two or three teaspoons of different colors of tempera paint to the bag and seal it. Tape the bag to the floor or a surface that mobile infants can reach. Encourage infants to touch the bag and push on the paint spots.

Sit on the floor to talk with nonmobile infants during play periods. Talk in an animated way and encourage kicking and rolling over when the infants are ready.

Preschool-age and older children will enjoy a challenge jumping over a small object on the floor. Example: Attach a paper moon to the floor. Cut two moon shapes if there are more than four children jumping. Encourage turn taking. Share books about the moon with toddlers and older children. Some possibilities include: *Round is a Mooncake* by Grace Lin, *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown, and *Peek-a-Boo Moon* by Parragon Books.

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BLOCK 24 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Sounds

Option 1 (OO) A young infant listens to a nursery rhyme and watches the corresponding movements of a toy spider.

Option 2 (OO) An infant listens to a nursery rhyme and watches the corresponding movements of a toy spider, with opportunities to also manipulate a toy spider.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants participate together in a nursery rhyme activity that involves opportunities to manipulate a toy spider as part of a song.

Cognitive

Solving Problems

Option 1 (OO) A young infant participates in guided play with toys that come apart.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant participates in guided play that includes opportunities to take apart arrangements of beanbags.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant participates in guided play that includes opportunities to take apart a tower of stacker pieces.

Self-Regulation

Focusing and Remembering

Option 1 (OO) A young infant is encouraged to persist in removing toys from a box.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant is encouraged to persist in scooting, crawling, or walking to get a box of toys and to remove toys from the box.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (IG) Two infants engage in a similar play activity, with guided opportunities to notice what the other is doing.

Option 2 (IG) Two older infants play alongside each other using shared materials, with guided opportunities to notice what the other is doing.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) An older infant moves on mats of two different textures.

Option 2 (IG) Older infants adapt motor movements to different textures.

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

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BLOCK 24

Exploring Sounds

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
A young infant listens to a nursery rhyme and watches the corresponding movements of a toy spider.

Key Concepts
Song
Watch
Listen

Materials Needed
Toy plush spider

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Sign and Sing Along: Itsy Bitsy Spider by Annie Kubler

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the words, tune, and finger actions of the "Itsy Bitsy Spider" nursery rhyme. Consider how to use a toy spider instead of your fingers for the actions.

BEGIN: [*Place the infant on his/her back in a supported reclining position. Ensure the infant can clearly see you.*

Hold the spider about 12 inches from the infant.]

ACT: This is a toy spider.

[*Pause for the infant to focus on the spider. Move the spider gently from side to side to attract the infant's attention, if necessary.*]

Our toy spider is going to move when I sing a song. You can listen to the song and watch the spider move. Are you ready for our spider to move?

[*Make eye contact with the infant and sing "Itsy Bitsy Spider" slowly. Move the spider in ways that correspond with the words of the song. You may wish to use the following movements:*

- *tilt hand back and forth while moving spider up*
- *swoosh spider down and out*
- *tilt hand back and forth while moving spider up once again*

Pause after one round of the song and describe the infant's reactions, including gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You are reaching for our toy spider. Here, you can touch the spider! The spider is fuzzy."

Repeat the song with movements 1–2 times if the infant remains engaged. After each round, talk about the infant's reactions.]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened. Example: "I sang a song about a spider. You watched the spider go up and then swoosh down! You are holding the toy spider from our song! You are feeling the spider's fuzzy body."*]

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
An infant listens to a nursery rhyme and watches the corresponding movements of a toy spider, with opportunities to also manipulate a toy spider.

Key Concepts
Song
Listen
Watch

Materials Needed
2 toy plush spiders

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Sign and Sing Along: Itsy Bitsy Spider by Annie Kubler

Be Prepared: Be familiar with the words, tune, and finger actions of the "Itsy Bitsy Spider" nursery rhyme. Consider how to use a toy spider instead of your fingers for the actions.

Invite an infant to sit on your lap for a song. Place the infant in your lap facing to the side. Ensure the infant is secure in your arms and able to make some eye contact. Introduce a toy spider. Encourage the infant to hold and explore the spider for a few moments. Then introduce the second spider and explain that you are going to sing a song about the spiders. Example: "I have a spider, too! I am going to sing a song about our spiders. You can listen to me sing the words. We can move our spiders during the song! Are you ready?"

Sing one round of the "Itsy Bitsy Spider" slowly, moving your spider in simple ways that correspond with the words. See movement suggestions in Option 1. Describe the infant's reactions, including gestures and/or vocalizations. Example: "You smiled and listened to our song. You watched my spider go up and then down. You waved your spider during our song!"

Offer another round of the song and movements if the infant remains engaged. Encourage the infant to move his/her spider as you sing.

Conclude the session by recognizing the infant's participation. Example: "You helped with our spider song! You cooed while I sang the words of our song. You watched my spider go up and then down. You moved your spider all around!"

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BLOCK 24

Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Older infants participate together in a nursery rhyme activity that involves opportunities to manipulate a toy spider as part of a song.

Key Concepts
Song
Up
Down

Materials Needed
Toy plush spiders—1 per infant and caregiver

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
Sign and Sing Along: Itsy Bitsy Spider by Annie Kubler

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who can sit independently. Be familiar with the words and tune of the "Itsy Bitsy Spider" nursery rhyme. This activity option uses simple up and down movements of the toy spider as part of the song.

Invite 2–3 infants to join you for a song. Sit facing the infants and introduce the toy spider. Explain that our song is about a spider that goes up and down. With the spider in your hand, facing the infants, slowly move your arm up and then down. Emphasize the words up and down. Then sing one round of "Itsy Bitsy Spider" slowly while moving your spider up and down in correspondence to the words. Describe and respond to gestures and/or vocalizations.

Give each infant a spider. Provide a brief time for the infants to touch and manipulate their toy spider. Then invite the infants to join you in moving their spider as you sing the rhyme. Emphasize up and down motions with the spider. After singing the rhyme with motions, describe the infants' actions. Example (with a brief demonstration of each described action): "You raised your arms, James! Isabella rocked back and forth with our song! Jackson said 'up'!"

Repeat the rhyme with actions if the infants remain interested. Conclude the session with a brief description of how each infant participated.

What to Look For—Options 1–3

Infants enjoy songs with finger or hand movements. Younger infants may coo, babble, or kick their legs. Older infants may join you in moving a toy spider up and down with their hand or arm. It is not appropriate to explicitly teach the up and down movements used in Option 3. Your informal demonstration is sufficient. Some infants in each option may prefer to watch and listen only. All forms of participation are valuable and important to recognize. What is important in each activity option is exposure to words, music, and movement, with opportunities to participate if interested. Infants cannot be expected to have a mental image or understanding of a spider, or the events and objects conveyed in the rhyme. But the activity can informally support their awareness of songs having a tune and words and sometimes actions that represent the words.

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ In Options 1 and 2, limit the number of movements with the toy spider if it appears the usual actions are too confusing for an infant to watch.

Enrichment ■ In Option 3, older infants who readily move their toy spider up and down might enjoy doing another action as part of the rhyme, such as using their fingers to pretend rain is coming down. ■ Show and talk about pictures in the Optional Reading book with infants after the song and movement activity.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: see below

Engage infants in familiar songs or rhymes during floor time. Offer rhymes and songs that emphasize up and down hand or arm actions. "Hickory Dickory Dock" is a possible addition to the "Itsy Bitsy Spider" offered in the activity options. Provide a rhyme-related toy for an infant to manipulate, such as a toy mouse for "Hickory Dickory Dock." Infants generally enjoy repeating songs with actions.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: *Sign and Sing Along: Itsy Bitsy Spider* by Annie Kubler

Many children are familiar with the "Itsy Bitsy Spider" rhyme and finger play. Read the book with children in your care. Demonstrate each sign and invite older children to imitate the sign. At the conclusion of the book, return to the beginning and invite children to join you singing and signing some of the familiar words. Younger infants and toddlers will enjoy listening and watching. Infants may enjoy holding a plush toy spider during the activity.

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BLOCK 24

Solving Problems

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills
A young infant participates in guided play with toys that come apart.

Key Concepts
On
Off

Materials Needed
Stacking cup
Small ball (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Secure a ball that is partially visible when placed inside the cup (see picture) and in a color that contrasts with the color of the cup.

During a tummy-time activity, place one stacking cup on the floor and invite the infant to look at it. Then hold the ball for the infant to see, and place it on the cup when the infant is looking. A portion of the ball should be visible. Name each toy as you point. Describe what you are doing.

Move the combined toys within reach of the infant. Invite the infant to touch the toys. Help the infant touch the toys if he/she reaches for them. Allow plenty of time for the infant to explore the toys. If the infant causes the ball to fall off the cup, enthusiastically explain what happened. Example: "The ball was on the cup. You touched the ball. The ball came off the cup!" If the infant does not touch the toys, or his/her action does not cause the ball to fall off the cup, tip the cup so the ball falls off. Explain what happened. Repeat the on and off actions as you describe each with short, clear phrases. Emphasize the words on and off. Pause after each so the infant has sufficient time to look at each arrangement (ball off the cup, ball on the cup).

Provide time and encouragement for the infant to play with the two toys if interested. Put the ball on the cup again so the infant has another opportunity to see the combined arrangement, and to maybe touch or manipulate the combined toys.

Describe the infant's actions or what the infant is feeling with his/her fingers, hands, or mouth. Examples: "Ahh. Trina, you got the ball to your mouth." "Umm. You feel the bumps with your tongue." Repeat and expand on the infant's vocalizations.

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BLOCK 24

Solving Problems *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills
An older infant participates in guided play that includes opportunities to take apart arrangements of beanbags.

Key Concepts
Apart
Pile
Line

Materials Needed
6 sensory beanbags

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Optional Reading
First Words (Bright Baby) by Roger Priddy

BEGIN: [*Invite an infant who can sit independently to play with the beanbags. Sit on the floor near the infant. Name and point to several beanbags. Example: "This is a beanbag. This is a beanbag. This is a beanbag. We have a lot of beanbags!"*

Stack all of the beanbags, one on top of another. Describe what you are doing.]

EXPLAIN: All our beanbags are in a pile. We have a pile of beanbags.

[*Point to the top of the pile.*]

ASK: Would you like to get a beanbag from our pile?

ACT: [*Pause for the infant to consider the pile. If the infant does not touch or start taking the pile apart, remove the top beanbag and then return it to the pile or put it on the floor. Encourage the infant to take a beanbag off the pile.*

Describe the infant's actions with simple, encouraging statements. Examples: "Xavier, you took a beanbag off our pile! Do you want to get another beanbag?" "Wow, you are taking apart our pile of beanbags. You pushed them to the floor!"

The sensory beanbags may prompt an infant to explore a beanbag he/she removed. The infant may shake the beanbag, mouth it, or feel it with his/her fingers or hands. Support the infant's exploration of a beanbag by describing his/her actions. Wait a few moments before pointing to the stacked beanbags and encouraging the infant to remove one more beanbag.

At this age, infants may use both hands to remove the beanbag. Some infants may dismantle the beanbag stack and set each beanbag on the floor. Continue to describe the actions in an encouraging manner.]

EXPLAIN: Our beanbags were in a pile. Now our beanbags are all on the floor! You took apart our pile of beanbags.

[*Emphasize the word apart. Point to the random arrangement of beanbags. Pause so the infant has time to look.*]

We can do something else with our beanbags. We can make a line with our beanbags.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

[*Place the beanbags in a line in front of the infant. Describe your actions as you arrange the beanbags, from the infant's left to right. Example: "First, the bumpy red beanbag. Next is the green beanbag. I am putting the gold nubby beanbag in our line, then blue, and then pink. The shiny yellow beanbag is at the end of our line." Emphasize the word line.*]

ACT: We can take apart our line of beanbags. Would you like to help me take beanbags away from our line?

[*Encourage the infant to remove beanbags from the line. If the infant remains interested, he/she may be interested in your forming another pile or line of beanbags to take apart and/or in manipulating individual beanbags.*]

RECAP: [*Describe what happened. Example: "We had a pile of beanbags. You took the pile apart. You took each beanbag off the pile. Then our beanbags were on the floor. We made a line with our beanbags. Then we made another pile!"*]

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Problem-solving
Object inquiry skills
An older infant participates in guided play that includes opportunities to take apart a tower of stacker pieces.

Key Concepts
Apart
Off

Materials Needed
Knob stacker toy

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Invite an infant who can sit independently to play with the knob stacker toy with you. Sit on the floor facing the infant and put the stacking toy together as the infant watches. Use simple phrases to explain you are putting the toy pieces together.

Invite the infant to take apart the toy. Emphasize the word apart. In addition to your words, use a gesture with the top piece to communicate your invitation. If the infant seems uncertain about what to do, remove 1–2 pieces, one at a time, as the infant watches. Return each piece to the tower for the infant to remove.

Describe the infant's actions in taking each piece off the tower. Emphasize the word off. Example: "Tamara, you are taking the little blue piece off the tower." Encourage the infant to remove each individual piece rather than knocking the tower over.

Draw attention to the pieces of the tower on the floor and explain that the pieces used to be in a tower. Emphasize that the infant took apart the tower by moving the toy pieces from the tower to the floor. The infant may be interested in your creating another tower for him/her to take apart.

What to Look For—Options 1–3

The three activity options are designed to help an infant become aware of how objects can be changed by taking them apart. The options are geared to different levels of cognitive and motor skills. In each activity, look for opportunities to emphasize changes in the arrangement of toys. Generally, before infants can put together toys, they are interested in taking them apart.

The Option 1 activity may be brief and easily incorporated into a tummy time, as suggested. The ways in which the activity unfolds will depend partly on the infant's ability to hold up his/her head for a sustained time and use his/her arms and hands while on his/her tummy. The activity can be beneficial if the infant watches only. Looking is a valuable way to explore.

Option 2 offers a more pronounced change in the arrangement of toys (beanbags) and opportunities for the infant to create the change. Watch the infant's attention to the beanbags after they are removed from the pile (sitting randomly on the floor). Make another pile of beanbags for the infant to take apart if it seems the infant would prefer a repeat. Make a line of beanbags at a later point if time or infant interest is short.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

In Option 3, if an infant knocks over the tower, simply put it back together and demonstrate taking off one piece. Kindly say to the infant, "Let's try it a different way." Point to the top piece and emphasize the word off. Some infants may be interested in putting the tower together. Arrange the stacking pieces in order by size. The largest stacking piece should be near the infant's left hand, and the last piece of the tower should be on the infant's right. Demonstrate how to set one on top of another, and give verbal guidance to the infant for stacking others.

The activity plans continue the practice of a caregiver using simple phrases to describe objects and actions. Gestures and facial expressions are central to communications because infants will not understand most of the words you use. Still, your use of language (with pauses) can strengthen an infant's understanding that language is associated with objects and actions.

The activities offer good opportunities to observe an infant's fine motor skills, particularly coordination of hands, fingers, and eye-hand. Examples of skills to observe: An infant may use two hands to manipulate items. An infant may pick up a small item with a pincer grasp (thumb and index finger), a skill that typically occurs between 8–12 months of age, or use a whole hand to grasp an item. You may see an infant use a pincer grasp or his/her whole hand to grasp the nesting pieces. At this age, infants may use either hand. A consistent preference for using one hand develops over the first two years.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–3

Extra support ■ In Option 1, align your actions with the cup and ball to when the infant is watching. You may wish to use words and slight movement of a toy to draw the infant's attention, but it is not necessary to coax the infant to be engaged. Offer this brief activity at a different time if the infant is interested in something else. ■ In Option 2, use beanbags without sensory differences if you anticipate the sensory characteristics of beanbags will distract an infant from noticing how a pile of beanbags can be changed. ■ In Option 3, use 3–4 rather than the eight pieces of the stacking tower.

Enrichment ■ In Option 2, provide a clear container for the infant to put the beanbags into when taking apart the pile. The infant may enjoy dumping the container of beanbags onto the floor. Draw attention to the way the beanbags scatter on the floor. ■ In Option 3, point to and name the knob on several pieces. If an infant seems especially interested in details, show how the knobs help the pieces fit together.

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Solving Problems *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: books, pictures of people and animals, cups, small and large toys, baskets or containers, animal figures, muffin cups

Provide books with single images on each page. Infants enjoy looking at photos of people and animals.

Make arrangements with cups and toys for non-mobile infants to view and touch. Create simple and attractive arrangements of play materials to support infants in learning by looking.

Throughout the week, put items into baskets or containers for infants to remove. Example: Place a muffin pan where an infant can discover it. Put a soft animal figure or other small toy in each muffin cup. Also, place items inside a cloth container for infants to remove.

Provide materials for mobile infants to transfer from one container to another. Use both large and small play materials.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: toys in Options 2 and 3, *The Three Bears* by Byron Barton, story props—such as bowls

Older toddlers and preschool-age children may enjoy putting together, independently or with your help, the toys used in Options 2 and 3. Preschool-age children also may enjoy identifying the appropriate sizes of items, such as bowls, for the characters in *The Three Bears* as part of a book sharing.

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BLOCK 24

Focusing and Remembering

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

A young infant is encouraged to persist in removing toys from a box.

Key Concepts
Look
Reach
Find

Materials Needed
Box with small toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can reach for and grasp small toys from a box. Place in a box five different small toys that will appeal to the infant. One possibility is Excellerations® Sensory Surprise Box with 5 Shapes.

BEGIN: [*Place next to you an infant who can sit independently or with support. Ensure the infant can clearly see you. Smile and make eye contact with the infant.*]

EXPLAIN: [*Hold up the box of toys.*]

There are toys in our box. Look at this neat toy!

[*Remove one toy from the box, show it to the infant, and return it to the box.*]

You can reach into our box. You can find some fun toys in our box.

ACT: [*Encourage the infant to remove toys from the box.*

Communicate excitement when the infant removes a toy. Describe the infant's actions and say the name of the toy. Example: "You found a ball! You reached into the box. You pulled a ball out of the box."

Recognize the infant's reactions to toys removed from the box. Example: "You are smiling! You are having fun finding toys in the box."]

RECAP: [*Smile and make eye contact with the infant as you briefly describe what happened. Example: "You reached inside the box. You worked hard to take toys out of the box. You had fun playing with the ball."*]

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An older infant is encouraged to persist in scooting, crawling, or walking to get a box of toys and to remove toys from the box.

Key Concepts
Look

Pull

Materials Needed
Box with small toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for a mobile infant. Place in a box five different small toys that will appeal to the infant. One possibility is Excellerations® Sensory Surprise Box with 5 Shapes.

Sit or kneel several feet from a mobile infant. Softly call the infant's name and hold up the box of toys. Explain there are fun toys inside the box. Remove one toy from the box, say the name of the toy, and hold it steady for the infant to see. Return the toy to the box. Remind the infant there are other toys in the box.

Keep the box on the floor near you and within full view of the infant. Invite the infant to move toward you to get the box. Encourage the infant as he/she moves toward the box. Examples: "You are coming to get our box of toys!" "You are almost here!"

When the infant reaches the box, invite him/her to take the toys out of the box. Describe the infant's actions and say the names of toys removed from the box. Examples: "You are looking inside our box. You are smiling." "You pulled a red ball from our box."

Enthusiastically acknowledge the infant's persistence in reaching the box and taking toys from the box. Example: "You crawled to get the box of toys. You looked at all of the toys inside the box. You pulled out a ball and a ring to play with."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Removing objects from containers is generally enjoyable to infants and is a part of other ELM activity plans. The current activity emphasizes persistence in removing items (Options 1 and 2) and in getting the box (Option 2).

Infants are likely to differ in how they approach the task of removing toys from the box. Some infants may prefer to remove only toys of interest. If this occurs, offer gentle encouragement to remove all toys from the box, but positively accept an infant's decision to leave some toys in the box. If an infant dumps the box of toys on the floor, encourage him/her to make a line or small group of the toys by moving each with his/her hand or arm. Name each toy the infant moves.

See the Extra Support tips for ways to encourage the infant to remove toys, especially if there are distractions from the task. In some circumstances, you

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

may wish to become a partner with the infant in looking at and maybe removing some toys. Examples: "Let's look in the box together. I see a ball! Do you want to reach in and get the ball?" "Look, I pulled this ball from our box. What would you like to pull from our box?"

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ If the infant seems initially reluctant to remove a toy from the box, pull one toy from the box and give it to the infant. Encourage the infant to remove others. ■ Place fewer toys in the box for the infant to remove. ■ Join the infant in looking inside the box together if you anticipate the infant is about to lose interest. Describe what you see in the box and encourage the infant to remove toys.

Enrichment ■ Invite the infant to place the toys back into the box.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: medium-sized, open cardboard box; assortment of familiar, small toys

Extend the activity options by placing several familiar toys in a cardboard box. During floor time, invite one or several infants to look into the box. Encourage the infants to reach inside and pull out toys of their choice. Describe the infants' actions as they explore the toys. Some infants may enjoy putting the toys back in the box. Talk with infants about their discoveries.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: variety of toys in baskets, bins, or boxes

Invite older infants and toddlers to practice dumping and filling containers with a variety of toys. Older children can dump toys to play with and then return toys to the container when they are done. Describe children's actions and encourage children to look at what their peers are doing.

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BLOCK 24

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Two infants engage in a similar play activity, with guided opportunities to notice what the other is doing.

Key Concepts
Play

Bed

Materials Needed
2 similar or identical dolls

2 baskets (see Be Prepared)

2 small blankets

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: The size of the each basket should accommodate a baby doll, so the basket can serve as a pretend bed. Place a blanket in the bottom of a basket.

Invite two infants to play with the baby dolls. Give each infant a box with a blanket inside and a doll. Present the box with blanket and the doll separately, so the infant can put the doll in the basket if he/she wishes. Explain that the baskets are pretend beds and it is time for the doll babies to go to sleep. Give time for the infants to figure out what to do with the materials.

If appropriate, offer prompts that may help infants pursue the bedtime theme. Example:

"Jada, you are putting your baby in the basket. I think your baby is going to sleep! Would you like to cover your baby with the blanket?"

Positively acknowledge an infant's attention to the other infant. Example: "Jada, you are watching Samuel put his baby in the basket. I think Samuel's baby is going to sleep." Conclude the play activity by briefly describing what each infant did.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Two older infants play alongside each other using shared materials, with guided opportunities to notice what the other is doing.

Key Concepts
Play

People

Materials Needed
4–6 people figures

3 boxes (shoe or tissue box size)

Large fabric or felt pieces

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: Arrange the play materials on the floor or on a low table. Create interest in the materials by placing 1–2 figures inside a box, on top of a box, and/or in a box turned on its side. Place the fabric/felt pieces over and under several of the people figures.

Invite two infants to play with the people figures. Introduce the materials and encourage each infant to play with items of interest as he/she wishes.

As the infants engage in parallel play, encourage awareness of what the other is doing. Example: "Neveah is putting all of her people in a box. See the box with the people inside? I wonder what the people are doing." Also, acknowledge instances of one infant paying attention to the other infant. Example: "Neveah, you are watching Rodrigo play. He is putting a piece of felt over his people. Maybe you would like a piece of felt for your people, too!" Conclude the play period by describing what each infant did. Point to items you describe.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Your main role in both activity options is to encourage infants to notice what the other is doing without distracting infants from exploring interesting materials in their own ways. This occurs best when you can recognize an infant's attention to his/her peer. You may see an infant watching or imitating a peer's actions with the materials. Paying attention to the actions of another infant may not occur naturally among some infants, especially when an infant's own exploration of materials is of strong interest.

Most infants are new to pretend play and will likely appreciate hints from you on what to do with the materials. Use gestures and demonstrations to complement your words. Be careful to avoid prescribing what to do with the materials.

Option 1 gives each infant the same materials and introduces a bedtime theme but is not intended to describe how to play bedtime. Option 2 provides a set of materials for the two infants to share, but the play is not expected to be jointly pursued. In both options, the use of similar materials enhances the likelihood of noticing what a peer is doing.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ In Option 2, ensure each infant has access to some of the shared materials without deciding what an infant should play with.

Enrichment ■ Offer play-related accessories, such as bottles.

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several strips of contact paper

Contact paper is a good material to use to promote infants' attention to others' play activities because it is a novel item. Provide different opportunities for infants to explore the stickiness of contact paper. Place paper on the floor (sticky side up) for young infants to touch during tummy time. Longer strips on the floor can be enjoyed by mobile infants by walking and crawling across the sticky surface. Contact paper on the wall can be discovered by sitting and mobile infants. Encourage infants to notice actions of one another as they explore the sticky paper.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: 2 dollhouses (or cardboard boxes in place of dollhouses); age-appropriate people figures; additional play materials, such as fabric/felt pieces, animal figures, or cars

Pretend play with people figures and houses can be enjoyed by children of all ages. Create two dollhouse play areas, one for older infants and toddlers, and one for preschool-age children. Adding new play materials to the doll houses over time can enhance children's play. Encourage and reinforce positive interactions between peers as they explore the play materials.

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BLOCK 24

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An older infant moves on mats of two different textures.

Key Concepts
Crawl

Soft

Bumpy

Materials Needed
2 mats of different textures (see Be Prepared)

Several small infant toys

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Tickle Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter

Pat the Bunny by Dorothy Kunhardt

First Words (Baby Touch and Feel) by DK Publishing

On the Farm (Bright Baby Touch and Feel) by Roger Priddy

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can creep, crawl, or walk. Prepare a multi-surfaced play area by placing two different mats on the floor side by side. Put several toys near the edges and two toys in the center of each textured mat. Possibilities for two mats of different textures include: a braided rug; an infant play mat with waffle texture; a soft, bumpy infant bath mat; and a small area rug with unique textures.

BEGIN: [*Invite an infant to join you at the textured mats. Describe the play area, including toys. Example: "This soft mat is a fun place to play. I put a toy doggy here for my friends." Sit on the floor facing the infant.*]

EXPLAIN: Here is a place you may crawl. The mats feel different. This mat is bumpy and soft.

[*Point to each mat as you talk about it.*]

There are (names of toys) on the mats if you would like to get one.

ACT: [*Enthusiastically describe an infant's actions and the mat texture. Example: "Isaiah, you are crawling on the bumpy mat to reach the puppy dog."*

You may wish to manipulate a toy slightly to draw attention to it. Example: animate the toy dog. "Doggy is saying 'woof.' Please come play with me. 'Woof, woof!'"

If an infant does not crawl onto the mat, place your hand on one mat or rug, describe how it feels, and invite the infant to feel the texture. Example: "Our rug is smooth. It has wooly patches. Would you like to feel this rug with your hand?"

It is not necessary to coax an infant onto a mat. Acknowledge the infant's choice. Example: "I see you looking at the (name of toy). I think you do not want to crawl on the mat. That is okay."

An infant may change his/her crawling or creeping style while

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

moving on the mats. An infant may enjoy sitting on the mats to play with a toy. Support the infant's interests and actions.

Acknowledge an infant's efforts to try something new.]

RECAP: [*Offer a brief summary of the infant's actions during the activity. Example: "You crawled a long way on your hands and knees to get the doggy. You crawled on the tile floor and on the soft bumpy mat. You got up on your toes and hands on the mat."*]

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

Older infants adapt motor movements to different textures.

Key Concepts
Crawl

Walk

Feel

Materials Needed
4 textured mats/rugs (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Communication/Language

Optional Reading
Tickle Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter

Pat the Bunny by Dorothy Kunhardt

First Words (Baby Touch and Feel) by DK Publishing

On the Farm (Bright Baby Touch and Feel) by Roger Priddy

Be Prepared: Arrange different mats and rugs end to end to make a road for infants in an open area where walking infants will not encounter barriers. Mat possibilities include: a braided rug; an infant play mat with waffle texture; a soft, bumpy infant bathmat; and a small area rug with unique textures.

Invite walking infants to an informal gathering near the mats. Greet each infant by name. Show the mats and talk about how each mat feels different. Kneel at the beginning of the "texture road" and encourage infants to crawl to the opposite end. Describe textures the infants can feel with their hands. Next, encourage infants to walk over the textured mats or rugs. Offer an infant your hand for extra support. Describe the sensation of walking on each mat. Example: "Our feet go down into the soft mat." On another day, fold over a play mat to create a double thickness. Encourage infants to crawl over the folded mat.

What to Look For—Options 1–2

Imagine walking without shoes on different surfaces, such as dry beach sand, tall grass, or a tiled floor. Without thinking, you would adapt your steps to accommodate the surface. Even with your eyes closed, you would be aware of differences between sand, grass, and tile because of your sensory perception. Sensory learning is central to all areas of infant development. Touch helps infants learn new ideas and concepts.

Most infants will be curious about the new play arrangement. Some infants may be very interested in being on the textured mats and naturally make accommodations to the mat. Example: On a soft mat you may see an infant balance weight on feet and hands, as if walking like a bear. Other infants may want to pursue their curiosity by observing. The toys provide a reason to get on and stay on a mat, although an infant may carry a toy off the mat. An Extra Support tip suggests that you move a desired toy to the edge of a mat for an infant who seems reluctant to get on a mat.

Several infants may want to get on the mats at the same time. Adjust the activity so you can talk with each infant, one at a time.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ In Option 1, move a desired toy to the edge of the mat for an infant who seems reluctant to get on a mat ■ Offer one texture mat at a time. After several days, combine them in a multi-textured area. ■ Introduce small textured items for infants to feel with their hands and feet. ■ Crawl alongside a crawling infant or walk alongside a walking infant. Offer positive comments and friendly facial expressions.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Enrichment ■ Place an infant play mat on the grass outdoors with several toys on the grass. Encourage infants to crawl from the grass to the mat. ■ Vary the height of one texture mat by placing it over a rug or low cushion. ■ Use a textured mat for book-sharing time.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: texture toys and items including bears and balls, basket, and books with textures

The sense of touch is key to infant learning. Provide similar toys with different textures to emphasize texture differences. An infant who holds a stacking ring and is then offered a cloth ring will sense a difference between the toys. Explain as the infant mouths or manipulates the toy, "Our ring is soft. Our other ring is smooth."

Display books with textures. Encourage infants to touch as you turn the pages and describe each picture. During play and care routines, highlight the feel of play materials, bibs, jackets, and other tactile objects the infants experience. Emphasize words that describe textures, such as bumpy, silky, smooth, soft, and fuzzy. Everyday experiences can provide infants opportunities to learn through senses.

Items that are ordinary to adults are new and interesting to infants. Combine play materials in new ways to create interesting experiences for infants. Example: Place texture bears and texture balls in a basket or bin.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: texture mats, items of different textures, cloth bag, ribbon scraps, different kinds of paper, seeds, buttons, and leaves, heavy paper, glue, touch and feel books—*Tickle Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter, *Pat the Bunny* by Dorothy Kunhardt, *First Words (Baby Touch and Feel)* by DK Publishing, *On the Farm (Bright Baby Touch and Feel)* by Roger Priddy

Toddlers may enjoy walking with bare feet on the texture mats. Use textured rugs to define play spaces for animal figures. Preschool-age children will be interested in identifying items by how they feel. Gather related items with different textures and place them in a cloth bag. Help children take turns reaching into the bag. Depending upon your location, a "fall feely bag" might contain: apple, leaf, pine cone, and acorn. Use items that are familiar to most children. Other bags could contain: a small book, tiny ball, toy car, and a marker. Older children will enjoy making feeling bags with play materials they select themselves.

A texture collage is a fun project for preschool-age and older children. Collect ribbon scraps, different kinds of paper, seeds, buttons, and leaves. Once you begin to gather collage items you will be surprised how many everyday items can be used! Provide heavy paper and glue in an area away from infants.

Create a special arrangement with touch and feel types of books, such as those listed in Materials Needed. You might consider putting the texture books on the sofa after rest time. Sit and look at pictures in the books. Encourage pointing and touching.

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BLOCK 25 Options to Promote Learning Birth–12 Months

Communication/ Language

Exploring Sounds

Option 1 (OO) An infant listens to the sounds of two farm animal puppets.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant listens to the sounds of four farm animal puppets, with opportunities to engage in pretend feeding of farm animals and making their sounds.

Cognitive

Exploring Objects

Option 1 (OO) A young infant watches and listens to a sound-making toy, with opportunities to touch and manipulate the toy.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant pushes on part of a toy and sees or hears an effect.

Option 3 (OO) An older infant helps build a block tower and push it over.

Self-Regulation

Focusing and Remembering

Option 1 (OO) An infant watches a caregiver manipulate and hide a toy.

Option 2 (OO) An older infant hides a toy under a cup for a caregiver to find.

Social-Emotional

Interacting with Others

Option 1 (IG) Young infants play with toys close to one another.

Option 2 (IG) Older infants play alongside each other using shared materials, with guided opportunities to notice what others are doing.

Physical/Health

Moving Our Bodies

Option 1 (OO) A young infant experiences gentle, guided movements of arms and legs.

Option 2 (OO) An infant scoots or crawls to a set of toys and grasps one of the toys.

Option 3 (IG) Older infants crawl while pretending to be an animal featured in a book.

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

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BLOCK 25

Exploring Sounds

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

An infant listens to the sounds of two farm animal puppets.

Key Concepts
Listen
Sound

Materials Needed
2 animal puppets (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently or with support. One possible source of animal puppets is the Get Ready Kids Bigmouth Farm Puppet Set, which includes a pig, cow, duck, and horse, each with embroidered eyes. The activity plan below uses a pig and a cow.

Sit across from the infant and place the puppets behind you, out of the infant's view.

Explain that two farm animals are going to visit today. Slowly introduce one of the puppets from behind your back. Keep the puppet closer to you than to the infant and use your voice, not a puppet voice, to say the name of the animal. Encourage the infant to listen to the sound made by the animal. Point to your ear when you say "listen." Make the sound of the animal and then repeat the sound as you move the puppet's head. Example: "This is a pig. The pig is our friend. A pig says 'oink, oink. Oink, oink.'"

Put the puppet on the floor next to you or behind you. Slowly introduce the other puppet, using the same approach. Example: "Here is another animal friend. This is a cow. The cow is our friend. A cow says 'moo, moo. Moo, moo.'"

Then slowly present the two puppets together, one on each of your hands. Move the head of each puppet as the puppets take turns making their sound. "Oink, oink. Moo, moo. Oink, oink. Moo, moo." Use your voice to make a distinctive animal sound. Example: a faster, higher-pitched "oink, oink," and a drawn out "moo, moo" with a lower voice.

Describe the infant's reaction to the animal sounds. You may wish to invite the infant to join you in making an animal sound and/or saying the name of the animal. If the infant reaches for a puppet, hold the puppet in your open hand so the infant can touch or grasp it. Avoid putting the puppet in the infant's hand.

If the infant remains interested in the puppets, you may wish to play a *Peekaboo* game by hiding a puppet briefly behind your back and saying the animal's sound when it appears. You also might make up a short story about one or both puppets that includes the infant's name. Example: "Once upon a time Mason had a farm! Mason had a pig on his farm! Mason's pig says 'oink, oink!'"

Conclude the activity with a brief description of what happened, including the infant's actions and the sounds made by the two animal puppets.

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BLOCK 25

Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Communication/ Language

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Receptive language
Expressive language
Awareness of differences in sounds

An older infant listens to the sounds of four farm animal puppets, with opportunities to engage in pretend feeding of farm animals and making their sounds.

Key Concepts
Pretend
Listen
Sound

Materials Needed
4 animal puppets (see Be Prepared)
Small bowl
Cloth bag

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can readily grasp and manipulate a small object. One possible source of animal puppets is the Get Ready Kids Bigmouth Farm Puppet Set, which includes a pig, cow, duck, and horse, each with embroidered eyes. Place the puppets in the cloth bag.

Sit across from the infant with the bag of animal puppets next to you. Explain that some farm animals are going to visit today. Slowly remove one of the puppets from the bag and show it to the infant. Keep the puppet closer to you than to the infant and use your voice, not a puppet voice, to say the name of the animal. Encourage the infant to listen to the sound made by the animal. Point to your ear when you say "listen." Make the sound of the animal and then repeat the sound as you move the puppet's head. Example: "This is a duck. The duck is our friend. A duck says 'quack, quack. Quack, quack.'"

Put the puppet on the floor next to you. Slowly introduce a second puppet, using the same approach. Example: "Here is another animal friend. This is a cow. The cow is our friend. A cow says 'moo, moo. Moo, moo.'"

Then present the two just-introduced puppets together, one on each of your hands. Move the head of each puppet as the puppets take turns making their sound. "Quack, quack. Moo, moo. Quack, quack. Moo, moo." Use your voice to make a distinctive animal sound. Example: a faster 'quack, quack,' and slower 'moo, moo.' Describe the infant's reaction to the animal sounds. Remind the infant we are listening to sounds. Point again to your ear when you emphasize listen.

You may wish to invite the infant to join you in making an animal sound and/or saying the name of the animal. If the infant reaches for a puppet, hold the puppet in your open hand so the infant can touch or grasp it. Avoid putting the puppet in the infant's hand.

Put the two puppets on the floor to your side. Introduce two more animal puppets from your bag, one at a time, using the approach described above. Include the use of both puppets at the same time, so the infant has the experience of hearing two different animal sounds back to back.

If the infant remains interested in the puppets, engage the infant in pretending to feed one or more of the animal puppets. Encourage the infant to hold the puppet or hold the bowl. The puppet's head can be put close to

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

the bowl in pretend eating. Make the animal's sound during or at the end of the feeding. Example: "Moo, moo" (in animal voice). "Our cow puppet liked the food! Our cow is saying 'moo, moo'" (in your voice).

Conclude the activity with a brief description of what happened, including the infant's actions and the sounds made by the four animal puppets. Remind the infant that we listened to sounds. Point to your ear when you say "listen."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

The activity options extend and refine the Block 23 attention to pictures and sounds of farm animals. The current options focus on a smaller number of animals and offer opportunities for an infant to repeatedly hear two different animal sounds back to back. Infants are not expected to learn the sounds made by specific types of animals. At a more general level, the puppets can help infants develop an early awareness that different kinds of things (such as farm animals), make different kinds of sounds. Infants' daily experiences actively support this idea, of course, through frequent exposure to different voices at home and in a child development center. Encouraging infants to imitate different sounds (or part of a sound) can support awareness of sound differences. Older infants may enjoy saying the name (or part of the name) of a familiar animal.

Infants are likely to differ in the extent to which they key in on the animal sounds. For younger infants especially, the novelty of puppets and the features of different puppets may be the main attraction of an activity.

Although most infants enjoy puppets, watch for signs of uncertainty about a puppet and promptly adapt your use of a puppet. You may wish to create more physical distance between the infant and the puppet, use only one puppet at a time, and/or assure the infant with your own voice (not the puppet's voice) that you are still present. Put away the puppet if the infant seems frightened. As indicated in the Extra Support tips, use the puppet to make an animal sound. At this young age, avoid using the puppet as a character who talks to the infant.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Slowly animate the puppet's head when it makes its sound. This can support an infant's awareness of the part of the animal's body that produces sound. Avoid dramatic movements of the puppet that might startle an infant. Use the puppet for making the appropriate animal sound. Use your voice, not an animal puppet voice, for talking with the infant. ■ Use three puppets in Option 2 if you anticipate four may be too many. One animal that seems to be of interest to the infant can be used in both sets of sound comparisons. Example: Pig and cow. Duck and cow.

Enrichment ■ Offer one bowl for each puppet's pretend eating time. Play alongside the infant in feeding two animals (one animal each) at the same time.

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Exploring Sounds *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several age-appropriate puppets

Offer puppets for infants to play with during floor time. Infants will appreciate your presence when they play with a puppet. Offer assistance to an infant who wants to place his/her own hand/arm into a puppet. Watch the infants' play and promptly provide props that might extend or enrich their interests.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of puppets

Children of all ages can enjoy and benefit from interactions with puppets. You may use puppets to announce transitions to older children, offer entertainment while waiting, support social interactions, and enhance play experiences. Invite older children to use puppets to act out familiar routines, such as washing hands. Older children may enjoy creating a short puppet show for toddlers and infants to watch.

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BLOCK 25

Exploring Objects

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

A young infant watches and listens to a sound-making toy, with opportunities to touch and manipulate the toy.

Key Concepts
Watch
Move
Sound

Materials Needed
Simple sound-making toy (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health
Communication/Language

Optional Reading
I Hear by Helen Oxenbury

Be Prepared: Secure a rattle or other small toy that makes a sound when moved. A toy in a bold color(s) will enhance its appeal.

BEGIN: [*Hold the infant in your arms so he/she is looking up at you. Say the infant's name and talk quietly about what is happening. Example: "Hi, Shivani. You are awake now and looking around."*

Hold the rattle about 12 inches from the infant.]

ACT: [*Hold the toy steady for the infant to see. Then move the toy to create a gentle sound. Use simple, clear words to describe the toy. Examples: "Our rattle is pretty." "We hear a little sound when the rattle moves."*

Move the rattle slowly to one side of the infant and then to the other. Encourage the infant to follow the rattle by making a light noise with it periodically and by saying the infant's name. Describe the infant's actions. Example: "You are watching our rattle. Our rattle is moving."

Hold the rattle close to the infant's hand. If the infant grasps the rattle, describe the movements, such as shaking it or bringing it to his/her mouth. Example: "You moved the rattle and made a little sound."

If the infant continues to look at the rattle, talk about what he/she sees. Acknowledge the infant's gaze, movements, and/or sounds.]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe the infant's reactions to the toy. Example: "You looked at our rattle. You listened when the little rattle made a sound. You touched the rattle with your finger."*]

What to Look For—Option 1

Looking at an object and visually following its movements are important ways to explore something. In the current activity, it is helpful to point out through your actions and words that a simple movement with the toy, such as shaking a rattle, can produce a sound. Early awareness of a cause-effect connection is more powerful if the infant provides the movement, but infant manipulation of a toy should not be rushed. Provide an opportunity for the infant to grasp and move the toy, but refrain from physically putting the infant's hand(s) on the toy.

Elm Early Learning Matters

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Repeat part of the activity at diapering time. Hold one hand on the infant and present a small rattle before diapering the infant.

Enrichment ■ If the infant enjoys manipulating the toy and seems aware of the result, provide another similar toy for the infant to explore, such as a rattle that is a slightly different shape.

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BLOCK 25

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant pushes on part of a toy and sees or hears an effect.

Key Concepts
Push

Materials Needed
Action toy (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Physical/Health

Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently or with support. Select a toy that quickly responds to something an infant does with it. Example: a toy telephone that makes a sound or lights up when its buttons are pushed.

Sit on the floor next to the infant and place the toy on the floor in front of the infant. Provide time for the infant to react to the toy. Encourage the infant to push buttons (or whatever is the appropriate part) on the toy, if necessary. As soon as the infant acts on the toy with a result, describe in simple words how the infant pushed part of the toy and then something happened. Example: "You pushed this button and the phone made a sound!" Emphasize the connection between the infant's push and what happened with the toy. Some toys require an additional action, such as putting a phone receiver to an ear so the sounds can be easily heard.

Repeat the process if the infant remains interested. A more complex toy, such as different sounds associated with different buttons, provides additional things for the infant to explore. Provide guidance, if necessary.

The intent of the activity is to promote the infant's beginning understanding of cause and effect. If you use a toy phone and the infant shows interest in using the phone for its intended purpose (talking), pretend you are talking to the infant on a pretend phone. Use the infant's name and smile to encourage vocalizations. Say a few words and then wait for the infant to respond.

What to Look For—Option 2

An infant may have experience with the toy you select. Your role in the activity is to help the infant strengthen his/her awareness of the cause-and-effect connections with the toy. A simple comment from you, as suggested in the activity plan, can be a valuable experience for an infant. There also may be an opportunity to strengthen motor development through play with the toy. Example: An infant may use his/her whole hand to push a button that responds better to a finger or two fingers. Demonstration may be helpful here.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Demonstrate how to push a button (or pertinent part of the toy) with your finger. ■ Offer an alternative sound-making toy if the toy you select is not of interest to the infant.

Enrichment ■ Support an infant's continued play with the toy. Examples: pretend talking on a phone; occasionally push a button to cause something to happen.

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BLOCK 25

Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Cognitive

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Object inquiry skills

An older infant helps build a block tower and push it over.

Key Concepts
Push

Fall down

Materials Needed
6 soft blocks

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Self-Regulation

Optional Reading
All Fall Down by Helen Oxenbury

Sit on the floor facing a mobile infant and invite him/her to play with soft blocks. Explain that we can stack our blocks and knock them down. Demonstrate and describe how to place one block on top of another. Encourage the infant to stack two blocks. If the infant's block falls, encourage him/her to try again. Provide a little bit of help so the infant can be successful.

If the infant has difficulty placing a block on top of one other block, create a platform with four blocks and invite the infant to put blocks on the top. Describe the infant's actions and offer encouragement.

Encourage the infant to push over the stack of blocks. Give a little clap and say "You made the blocks fall down." Repeat the stacking process if the infant remains interested.

What to Look For—Option 3

The action of pushing over the blocks is enjoyable and provides visible evidence of cause and effect. Look for opportunities to emphasize that the infant's push caused the blocks to fall down. The key words are push and fall down. This activity generally holds an infant's attention. Some infants may help you stack the blocks, and some infants may simply watch you create a tower. There are important benefits to both cognitive and motor development from helping build the tower, but readiness for this aspect of the activity will vary considerably. As suggested in an Enrichment tip, it is easy to add challenge to the tower-building part of the activity, whether the infant watches or contributes to the creation of a tower.

An infant may be eager to push over blocks before a tower is fully built. Causing blocks to tumble supports the cognitive focus of this activity. After several rounds of blocks being pushed over before a tower is complete, you may wish to help the infant with the self-regulation task of waiting until a tower is built. The waiting may be easier for an infant to manage if he/she contributes to the tower building and if you offer little progress reports, such as "One more block goes on" and "Now another block." You also may want to consider building a shorter tower.

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Exploring Objects *(continued)*

Option 3 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Use larger blocks the infants can pick up with two hands. ■ Use three large blocks only for the first tower.

Enrichment ■ Add several more blocks to a repeated stacking process and emphasize the word "more." ■ Share the Optional Reading book, *All Fall Down*.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: sound-producing toys (such as rattles and bells), soft and rigid containers, push toys (such as large, lightweight vehicles), tote bag, different small items for tote bag and containers

Arrange different kinds of rattles and bells within easy reach of infants. Extend the exploration of cause (actions) and effects by providing toys that infants can use to fill, and then dump, from soft and rigid containers. Also provide toys for crawling that infants may push, such as large, lightweight vehicles. Place several different items into a tote and encourage older infants to take out the objects. Use a play mat to create a small incline. Encourage mobile infants to roll balls or cars down the incline.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: soft blocks

Engage an older toddler or preschool-age child in helping an infant build a tower (Option 3). Urge the older helper to tell how he/she is building the tower, and to let the infant push over the tower.

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BLOCK 25

Focusing and Remembering

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An infant watches a caregiver manipulate and hide a toy.

Key Concepts
Watch

Find

Materials Needed
Small toy

2 large nesting cups

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Physical/Health

Invite an infant who can sit independently or with support to join you for a game of hiding a toy. Sit facing the infant. Introduce the small toy. Invite the infant to hold and explore the toy for a few moments. Then introduce one cup and place it face (opening) down in front of the infant.

Explain that you are going to hide the toy under the cup. Encourage the infant to watch what you do with the toy. With deliberate movements in view of the infant, place the toy under the cup with a portion of the toy showing for the infant to see. Invite the infant to find the toy. Show excitement if the infant reaches for or gazes at the toy.

Hide the toy again with the infant watching, this time completely placing the toy under the cup. Encourage the infant to watch and then find the hidden toy. If the infant does not reveal the toy, lift the cup with enthusiasm and show excitement over finding the toy.

If the infant remains interested, add the second cup to the activity. Place both cups in front of the infant. Explain that you are going to hide the toy under one of the cups. With deliberate actions, place the toy under the same cup as before. Hide the toy completely or leave a portion of the toy in view, depending on the infant's reactions to the hidden toy in the first round. Show excitement and enthusiasm as the toy is revealed. Example: "Wow! You looked under one cup. Then you looked under the other cup. You found the elephant!"

Offer several more exchanges if the infant remains interested. Acknowledge the infant's focus during the activity. Example: "You watched me hide the toy, Samantha. You looked under the cups. You found the toy! Thank you for playing with me."

Early Learning Matters

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BLOCK 25

Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Self-Regulation

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Executive function

An older infant hides a toy under a cup for a caregiver to find.

Key Concepts
Watch

Hide

Materials Needed
Small toy

Two large nesting cups

Also Promotes
Cognitive

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who can sit independently and can readily grasp and manipulate a small object.

Invite the infant to join you to play a game of hiding a toy. Sit facing the infant with a smile. Introduce the toy. Encourage the infant to hold and move the toy. Introduce the two cups. Place both face (opening) down in front of the infant. Explain that you are going to hide the toy under one of the cups for the infant to find. Ask the infant if he/she is ready for you to hide the toy. Encourage the infant to watch your movements as you place the toy underneath one of the cups. Leave a portion of the toy in view. Invite the infant to find the toy. Example: "You watched me hide the toy. You found the toy!" Show excitement as the toy is revealed. Repeat the hiding and finding process, this time with the toy fully hidden.

Invite the infant to hide the toy under one of the cups. Watch the infant's actions. After the toy is hidden, announce you are going to look for the toy. Talk about your search. Example: "I watched you hide the toy. I remember where you put the toy. The toy is under this cup!" Again, express enthusiasm over finding the toy.

Offer another round of the infant hiding the toy, if the infant seems interested. Conclude the activity by recognizing the infant's focus during the activity. Example: "You watched me hide the toy. Then I watched you hide the toy. We remembered where the toy was hiding!"

What to Look For—Options 1–2

The activity options promote the importance of watching what happens to an object. Hiding the toy when the infant or you are not watching would defeat this purpose. The activities emphasize watching more than remembering, although the use of two cups adds an element of remembering to the activity. The infant's role in placing the toy under a cup in Option 2 is a valuable way to strengthen awareness of why we watch what happens to something. Some infants in Option 2 may find it challenging to hide the toy independently and will likely welcome your verbal support and gestures for what to do.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ Adjust how much of the hidden toy is exposed (more, less, none), based on the infant's approach to the activity.

Enrichment ■ If an infant readily identifies the hidden toy, or hides the toy for you to find, introduce a third cup to the activity.

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Focusing and Remembering *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: several containers of different types and sizes, assortment of small toys

Extend Options 1 and/or 2 to infants in an informal gathering. Use containers other than the nesting cups used in the activity options. Use several different toys, hiding one at a time. Pay close attention to infants' reactions so you can determine how much of a toy to reveal when placing it under a container. Invite older infants to hide a toy (one each) for you to find. Emphasize the importance of watching. Younger infants will enjoy watching older infants hide and find a toy.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: see description

Children of all ages enjoy hiding and finding objects. School-age children may welcome opportunities to play a memory board game with a peer. Offer Option 2 to preschool-age children and older toddlers, with the additional practice of not looking when a toy is hidden. This emphasizes remembering skills and strengthens the development of object permanence.

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BLOCK 25

Interacting with Others

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Young infants play with toys close to one another.

Key Concepts
Play

Materials Needed
Several toys (see Be Prepared)

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who are learning to reach and/or grasp. Select 2–4 toys that will be visually interesting to infants in this activity and appealing to touch or grasp. Your toy selection will probably vary across infants.

BEGIN: [*Gently place two infants on their tummies, facing one another. Arrange several toys between the infants, close enough for each infant to reach.*]

ACT: [*Encourage each infant to reach for and grasp a toy of interest. Move a toy(s) if an infant is having difficulty reaching it.*

Describe each infant's actions, including toy explorations and an infant paying attention to the other infant. Examples: "Manuel is playing with a rattle. He is moving the rattle." "Jasmine, you are watching Manuel. You are smiling!"

Move an infant to another activity if he/she shows discomfort or fussiness. Notice whether the remaining infant seems interested in relocating, too.]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe highlights of the play, including any awareness of one another. Example: "Jasmine and Manuel, you played with fun toys. Manuel, you watched Jasmine play. You smiled at Jasmine."*]

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

Social-Emotional

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
Informal Gathering

Skill and Goal
Social interaction skills

Older infants play alongside each other using shared materials, with guided opportunities to notice what others are doing.

Key Concepts
Play
Blocks

Materials Needed
Soft building blocks
Basket or tub

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Physical/Health

Be Prepared: This activity is for infants who can sit independently and reach and grasp small items. Place most of the blocks in the basket. Arrange the remaining blocks in an interesting display on the floor.

Invite 2–4 infants to join you on the floor to play with blocks. Introduce the materials by pointing to and describing the display of blocks you created and by showing there are more blocks in the basket. Place the basket in a central location, near your block creation.

Invite the infants to play with the blocks. Encourage each infant to play as he/she desires. This activity offers opportunities for parallel play, and is not intended to be a group effort. Offer prompts that support each infant's play.

As the infants play, encourage awareness of one another's actions without interrupting or directing the play. Example: "Our friend Abigail is dumping the blocks out of the basket. Look at all the blocks we can play with!"

Point out any instances of an infant paying attention to another infant's efforts. Example: "Abigail, you are watching Elias put his blocks in a line."

What to Look For—Options 1–2

The activity options extend prior offerings of play opportunities designed to help an infant notice what another infant is doing. The structure of the two activity options sets the stage for an infant to notice a peer(s), which is an important early skill in getting along well with others. Whether an infant notices another infant is influenced by many factors a caregiver cannot manage without the risk of disrupting the play. The play itself can be beneficial without an infant noticing what another infant is doing.

Option 2 offers more potential challenge than the similar Option 2 in Block 24 by involving more than two infants. Although there should be a sufficient number of blocks to meet each infant's interests, the activity may provide early experiences in sharing materials. Draw attention to an infant who shows

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Interacting with Others *(continued)*

interest in a peer(s) by watching or imitating another's actions with the materials. Interactions among infants are more important than how the blocks are used.

More Scaffolding Tips—Options 1–2

Extra support ■ In Option 1, remember to position yourself so you can see the facial expressions of each infant. ■ If block sharing is an issue in Option 2, provide each infant with a set of blocks to play with.

Enrichment ■ Provide several people or animal figures with Option 2 if it seems an infant would like to put a different type of object on top of a block.

Interest Area

Materials Needed: assortment of blocks

Extend Option 2 by providing different types of blocks for infants to explore freely. Briefly describe what each infant is doing with the blocks. Point or gesture as part of communicating with infants. Recognize all forms of interaction with the blocks.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: assortment of blocks arranged by age level, toy vehicles, animal and people figures

Toddlers and preschool-age children enjoy playing with blocks and typically appreciate the availability of materials that can enrich the play, including toys suggested here. Parallel play may be most prevalent with blocks at this age, but there may be opportunities to suggest joint constructions or theme-based play involving several older children.

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BLOCK 25

Moving Our Bodies

Physical/ Health

Birth–12 Months

Option 1
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

A young infant experiences gentle, guided movements of arms and legs.

Key Concepts
Moves

Up

Down

Materials Needed
None

Also Promotes
Communication/Language

Place a non-mobile infant on his/her back and sit on the floor facing the infant. Talk to the infant and use his/her name. Make eye contact, offer big smiles, and help the infant become comfortable. Hold the infant's feet in your hands and describe his/her feet or shoes. Slightly wiggle the infant's feet but do not tickle.

Tell the infant you are going to move his/her feet, legs, and arms. Do the following to help the infant strengthen awareness of his/her body. All movements are to be done gently and within a range that is completely comfortable to the infant.

- Playfully move the infant's legs while watching his/her reaction. Left leg up and down slowly. Repeat. Then right leg up and down slowly. Repeat. Sing or say the following with each leg movement: "(Infant's name)'s leg moves up. (Infant's name)'s leg moves down."
- If the infant remains interested, repeat the above with the infant's arms. Left arm up and down slowly. Repeat. Right arm up and down slowly. Repeat. Say or sing the following with each arm movement: "(Infant's name)'s arm moves up. (Infant's name)'s arm moves down."
- Hold the infant's feet in your hands and gently bend one knee into his/her body. Alternate bending the legs, as if the infant is pedaling a bicycle. With each movement, say or sing a variation of the phrase suggested above.
- Pause between the sets of movements to talk to the infant. Constantly gauge his/her reaction to the activity. If the infant is content, continue.

What to Look For—Option 1

This activity provides the types of movements that eventually combine into a crawling motion. Movements that occur on one side of the body (lateral movements) and movements that involve opposite sides of the body (opposition) are necessary for the body and brain to coordinate crawling actions. Some infants will enjoy the movements the first time they are introduced, whereas others may prefer a more gradual introduction of the movements, such as offering the leg movements in one session and arm movements in a later session.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 1 continued

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 1

Extra support ■ Spread the movements across different periods of the day when the infant is fully alert. ■ In the first use of the movements with an infant, do not repeat a movement, as suggested in the plan.

Enrichment ■ Add a third set of movements: Gently lift the infant's right hand and left foot together. Repeat. Gently lift the infant's left hand and right foot together. Repeat. ■ For an infant who enjoys kicking, sit on the floor facing the infant. Hold a small beach ball in position for the infant to kick or push with his/her feet.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 2
One-to-One

Skill and Goal
Gross motor development

An infant scoots or crawls to a set of toys and grasps one of the toys.

Key Concepts
Scoot
Crawl

Materials Needed
Familiar toy

Also Promotes
Cognitive
Communication/Language

Be Prepared: This activity is for an infant who is beginning to scoot or crawl. Place a familiar and desirable toy, such as a soft doll or animal, in the toy truck for the infant to grasp.

BEGIN: [*Sit on the floor next to the infant. Place the combined toys in a position the infant can easily reach by scooting or crawling. Point to and describe the toys you have arranged. Example: "There is our monkey in the little truck!*]

ACT: [*Use hand gestures and words to encourage the infant to move toward the play materials. Example: "Do you want to get the monkey?"*

If the infant seems hesitant to move, place the toys closer to the infant or crawl toward the toys while urging the infant to follow.

Describe the infant's efforts to move along the floor. Example: "Dylan, you are scooting on your tummy. You are going to get the monkey!"

Describe the infant's actions with the toys. Example: "Dylan, you pulled the monkey out of the bus."

Watch for a nonverbal signal that the infant is ready to stop the activity or wants to move to another area. Say repeatedly "all done," or something similar, to indicate the play with the truck and toy is over. The infant may want to come closer to you for contact, such as a brief hug.]

RECAP: [*Briefly describe the infant's actions and interest in the toys. "Dylan, you had fun crawling over to the little truck. You took our monkey out of the bus. You gave the monkey a hug!"*]

What to Look For—Option 2

Infants generally develop their own way of crawling. Some infants may push themselves along the floor with their toes, whereas other infants may balance their weight on hands and knees. Infants who can crawl generally spend half their awake time involved in gross motor movements, and are likely to want to crawl to a different location soon after reaching the toys you arranged.

Infants are naturally curious and motivated to explore and touch. Play materials arranged in a novel way may be especially interesting to an infant. Choose play materials based on an infant's interests and, in a follow-up offer of this activity, consider adding more materials or partially hiding some materials, as suggested in the Enrichment tip.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Option 2 continued

Remember that when you comment on the infant's accomplishment in reaching the toys, it is far more helpful to describe what the infant did than to simply say "good job."

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 2

Extra support ■ Sit near the toys and encourage the infant to crawl toward you. ■ Put the toy back in the truck and place it in a different reachable location so the infant can move toward it and remove it again.

Enrichment ■ Partially cover the familiar toy with a scarf.

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Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Birth–12 Months

Option 3
Informal Gathering

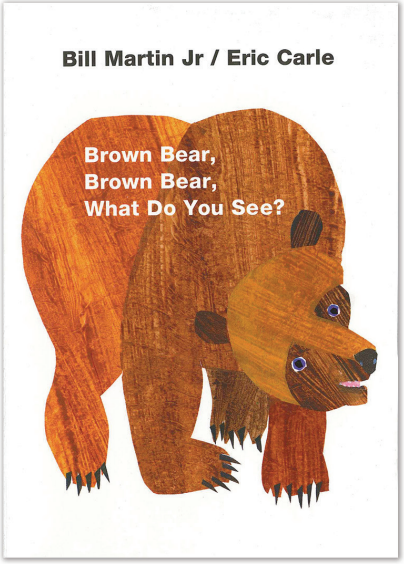
Skill and Goal
Gross motor development
Older infants crawl while pretending to be an animal featured in a book.

Key Concepts
Move

Materials Needed
Big Book edition of *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle

Also Promotes
Communication/Language
Social-Emotional

Optional Reading
Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear? by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle



Invite mobile infants to join you in looking at a book. Share the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by showing and describing pictures of animals that you anticipate will be of interest to the infants. Emphasize how the animals move. It is not necessary to read the book text or show all pages.

Invite infants to join you in pretending we are an animal shown in the book. Select a pictured four-legged animal that will be of interest to the infants, such as a baby lion or a baby bear. Encourage crawling around the room on all fours and pretending to be the animal. Use a simple, friendly make-believe invitation. Example: "Come on, baby bears! Let's move around!"

Encourage the infants' movements by enthusiastically describing how they are moving like the designated animal. After a few minutes of crawling, invite the infants to a rug or mat to look at pictures of animals. Example: "Please come with me, baby bears. Let's look at a book." Show and describe the picture of the animal the infants pretended to be and other animals of interest.

What to Look For—Option 3

Developing motor control for crawling requires tremendous effort that can be supported in a fun way in this activity. Infants will differ in their crawling skills. Crawling becomes automatic when crawling is well developed. Infants who are learning to walk are likely be interested in this activity because they often revert to crawling to get from one place to another. Developmentally, the pretend element of the activity may be challenging for many infants to embrace. Pretending to be an animal is intended to add fun to the activity, and not serve as a focused experience in imagining to be something else.

More Scaffolding Tips—Option 3

Extra support ■ Offer the book-sharing segment in an area that is close to where the crawling is to occur.

Enrichment ■ Provide a variety of textures for the infants to crawl on, such as foam shapes intended for infants or mats with texture. ■ Rearrange pieces of infant climbing mats so there is an incline adjacent to a low surface.

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BLOCK 25

Moving Our Bodies *(continued)*

Interest Area

Materials Needed: play materials, balls, non-breakable pitcher

Familiar and novel materials support infants' explorations and locomotion. Consider materials used in prior ELM activity plans, such as a scarf in an O-ball®. Rotate play materials to create interest in crawling and exploring. Arrange familiar toys in novel ways for infants to discover. Example: put balls into a non-breakable pitcher. Place several toys on low surfaces where mobile infants can begin to practice pulling up to stand. Vary the play materials for infants who participate in tummy time each day.

Family Child Care

Materials Needed: age-appropriate play materials, large sheets of paper, crayons, foam pool noodle

In addition to offering the activity options for infants, place play materials at different levels for toddlers and preschool-age children to find and explore. Attach paper to surfaces at different heights for coloring. Consider moving a sensory tub to the floor. Play an under-and-over game by placing a foam pool noodle (swim toy) at different heights, encouraging participation by asking "Can you go under the noodle?" and "Can you go over the noodle?"

This activity plan is informed by the following sources: Connell, G., Pirie, W., & McCarthy, C. (2016). *Move, play and learn with smart steps: Sequenced activities to build the body and the brain*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing. ; California Department of Education/Child Development Division. (2012). *California infant/toddler curriculum framework.* Sacramento, CA: Author. ; Adolph, K. E., & Joh. A. S. (2007). Motor development: How infants get into the act. In A. Slater and M. Lewis. (Eds.), I*ntroduction to infant development* (2nd ed., pp.63-80). New York: Oxford University Press.

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