

# The EYFS Activity Library:

## 50 EYFS Activities

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# Number Hunting



**Age group:** 22 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 30 mins - 1 h



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 3

Submerge some numbers and have the children pick them out using tongs to improve fine motor control while working on number recognition!

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling

M - Numbers

EAD - Exploring and using media and materials

## What you'll need:

- A substance like Oobleck, shredded paper, pasta or rice
- Bowls
- Plastic numbers
- Tongs

## What you do:

1. First, take a bowl filled with your substance of choice and submerge a few plastic numbers in it. That might be a liquid substance like jelly or Oobleck (which you can find out how to make in [another of our activities](#)) or a solid substance like pasta, rice, or shredded paper.
2. Once you're ready to start the activity, hand out tongs to the children and show them how to pick up the numbers using the tongs.
3. As the children are getting stuck into the messy play, get your practitioners to ask questions about the numbers, helping to improve the children's number recognition.





# The Family Memory Box



**Age group:** 0 m - 36 m



**Activity length:** 30 mins - 1 hr



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 3

Get some photos from home and prepare a little memory box to help children feel comfortable in the setting and understand their place in the world.

## What you'll need:

- Photos from family members
- A box or wall display

## What you do:

1. Start by asking family members to bring in photographs of the children's relatives, favourite things, and other close attachment objects such as pets.
2. Create a memory box with the photographs in, which you can share with the little ones throughout the day.
3. Got a bit more time on your hands? Why not create a family tree display which children can use to start recognising other families too?
4. The photographs can help comfort younger children and give them some understanding of their place in the world. As they grow, the pictures can be useful to give them an understanding of the differences between their own home environment and that of their fellow learners.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
CL - Understanding  
CL - Speaking  
UW - People and communities





# The Dark & Light Nook



**Age group:** 22 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 1 hr+



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

Find a dark corner of the setting and use torches to let the children explore light and dark, shadows and silhouettes.

## EYFS areas:

UW - Technology  
CL - Listening and attention  
PSED - Self-confidence  
EAD - Being imaginative  
EAD - Exploring and using media and materials

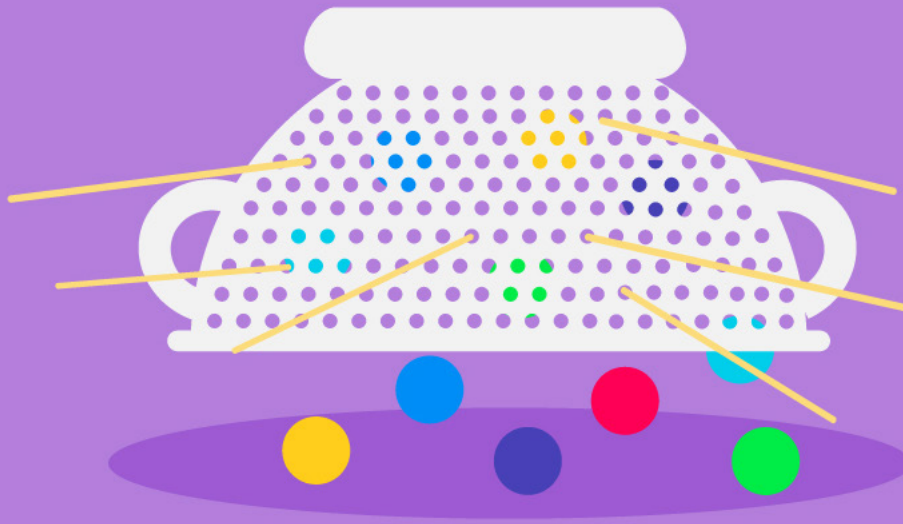
## What you'll need:

- A dark corner or DIY fort
- Some torches or other lights
- A music player

## What you do:

1. To begin, you'll need a dark corner of the setting, or use some blankets and chairs to create a makeshift fort.
2. Take a few children with you at a time, handing them the torches and letting them experiment with dark and light, turning the torches on and off. They can also look at the silhouettes they create and the shadows their bodies can make.
3. To add a new layer to the activity, take a music player in with you and see if the children are interested in moving the light and dark shapes in time to the music.





# The Pom Pom Avalanche



**Age group:** 22 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 30 mins - 1 hr



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 3

This budget version of Kerplunk is the perfect activity for busy young minds.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Speaking  
PSED - Making relationships  
PD - Moving and handling  
EAD - Being imaginative

## What you'll need:

- Approx. 40 coloured pom-poms
- BBQ sticks or pipe-cleaners
- A large colander

## What you do:

1. Sit the colander on a surface and fill it up with pom-poms.
2. Once the pom-poms are in, place your sticks or pipe cleaners through the holes, from one side to the other. Depending on the situation the children can help you out with this too!
3. Turn the colander upside down, and get the children to take turns in removing the sticks.
4. As they take out various sticks, pom poms should start to fall onto the table.
5. Don't place any rules on the children, or any idea of 'winners' - let them choose how the game works.
6. Great for their fine-motor control, it's also a great way to let them express their imagination and practice taking turns.





# Magical Letters



**Age group:** 30 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 30 mins - 1 hr



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

## EYFS areas:

L - Reading

L - Writing

PD - Moving and handling

Make some hidden letters on white paper and let the children paint over them, revealing the letters before their eyes!

## What you'll need:

- White crayons
- Watercolour paint
- White paper
- Paintbrushes

## What you do:

1. Take the white crayon and draw some random letters or short words on the white paper. Don't worry - you shouldn't be able to see anything just yet.
2. Hand the paper to the children and get them to paint over the paper with their watercolour paint.
3. Watch as they are fascinated by the shapes that start to appear before their eyes!
4. If the children are interested in the activity, why not show them how the magic is done? If they're engaged, then it's a great opportunity to improve their mark-making and maybe even get them to try some rudimentary letters of their own.





# The Story Bag



**Age group:** 22 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 15 - 30 mins



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 4

Create a story bag with items from a child's favourite story and let the child explore the bag, matching the items up to parts of the book as they go.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Understanding

CL - Speaking

PSED - Managing feelings and behaviour

L - Reading

UW - The World

## What you'll need:

- A favourite picture book
- A soft material bag
- Items from the story

## What you do:

1. Start by selecting a picture book that the children love, and then collect a number of items that represent characters, objects, or other aspects of the story.
2. Get the children to feel around in the bag and pick an item out.
3. Now the fun begins! The children can match the item to passages that you read out, or flip through the pages to try and find the item. They can explore the item and describe to you what it looks, feels, or smells like.
4. To take it to the next step, recap a little about the story and the role the item plays. Then see if the little ones can apply it to other contexts, by asking them questions about what it's used for, whether they've seen it before, and see if they can find another example of the item in the room.
5. For the younger children it's best to start with identical 3D objects but as the children get older, you can use different or more sophisticated representations of items in the story.







# Nursery Science: Making Oobleck



Age group:



Activity length:



Set-up difficulty (1-5):

**Make this fascinating substance that is both liquid and solid all at once and you'll have yourself endless hours of multi-sensory messy play.**

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling  
PD - Health and self-care  
PSED - Making relationships  
M - Shape, space and measure  
M - Numbers  
EAD - Exploring and using materials

## What you'll need:

- Corn flour
- Water
- Food colouring

## What you do:

1. Mix together 2 parts corn flour to one part water with a few drops of food colouring. Here the kids can learn about colour mixing, counting and measuring, using tools, collaboration, and more.
2. You'll now have a slimy substance that goes solid when you apply hard pressure and is more liquid when you apply less.
3. The children can explore the way the goo feels and moves, and understand ideas like cause and effect. For example, when they hit the goo fast it will be hard while it will turn to liquid when they move more slowly.
4. You can also practice language skills as they describe the texture, look, and smell of the goo, and you can develop fine motor skills by hiding objects in it.
5. **CLEAN UP ADVICE** - You don't want to just pour everything down the sink and clog up your drains. Wash little hands and tools in a big bowl and then leave overnight. Eventually, the corn flour will settle to the bottom and you can pour the water from the top down the sink and the corn flour straight into the bin.





# Songs & Nursery Rhymes



**Age group: 0 m - 60 m**



**Activity length: 15 - 30 mins**



**Set-up difficulty (1-5): 1**

Songs and nursery rhymes are classics for a reason. Take a look at the full range of learning opportunities they can offer.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
CL - Understanding  
CL - Speaking  
PSED - Managing behaviour  
L - Reading  
M- Numbers

## What you'll need:

- Songs and nursery rhymes
- Stuffed animals or hand puppets (optional)

## What you do:

1. Pick your favourite nursery rhyme or song and introduce it to the children. We've got some [inspiration over on our blog](#) if you're stuck.
2. Teach gestures, facial expressions, and motions to children so that everyone can join in on some level, even if they can't remember the words yet.
3. You can give each child a stuffed animal or puppet and get them to hold them up when they're mentioned in the song. Once the children are familiar with the song, you can expand into more learning experiences by tapping the objects one by one to practise 1:1 correspondence and have the children imitate and join in (especially with counting nursery rhymes).
4. Another way to extend the activity is to leave out words and have the children shout or sing the word to practise memory and literacy skills.





# The Obstacle Course



Age group: 0 m - 60 m



Activity length: 1 hr+



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 3

Create a mini indoor or outdoor obstacle course to get the children physically active, all while learning how to interact with one another.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Understanding

PD - Moving and handling

PD - Health and self-care

PSED - Self-confidence and self-awareness

PSED - Making relationships

## What you'll need:

- Tents
- Tunnels
- Ramps
- Toys for inside
- Whatever you can find!

## What you do:

1. Start out by laying out an obstacle course. You can use things like tents, tunnels, and ramps, or get creative and just use whatever you have lying around the setting.
2. The activity really can work for any age. If they can crawl, then you can run a little simple obstacle course. You might need to make it a little more complicated for the older ones though!
3. If the younger children are reluctant, you can try using toys in the tunnels and ramps to encourage them to engage.
4. Children will interact with one another, and gain confidence from copying and playing together. They learn skills about taking turns and will try lots of new, and challenging, activities.





# Pots, Pans and Sand

 Age group: 8 m - 36 m

 Activity length: 30 min - 1 hr

 Set-up difficulty (1-5): 1

Placing various different pots, pans, and other cooking utensils in a sandbox gives children an opportunity to practice moving the sand around while making sweet music.

## What you'll need:

- A sandbox
- Pots
- Cans
- Colanders or sieves
- Wooden spoons

## What you do:

1. Fill up your sandbox with all sorts of kitchen implements - pots, pans, colanders, sieves, wooden spoons and more.
2. Let children explore the resource. They may choose to make music with the pots and pans, or use them to move around the sand, filter it out, or watch it fall through.
3. They'll also get to explore the different textures, and hear the different sounds that the sand makes as it runs through the different implements.
4. As the children get older and are able to start lifting up the heavier pots and pans, it might be time to swap them out for plastic ones.

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling  
EAD - Exploring and using media and materials  
EAD - Being imaginative





# Sensory Baskets

 **Age group:** 0 m - 26 m

 **Activity length:** 15 - 30 mins

 **Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

This classic activity is perfect for your under 2s in order to help them understand the world around them.

## EYFS areas:

L - Writing

UW - The World

EAD - Exploring and using materials

EAD - Being imaginative

M - Numbers

PD - Moving and handling

## What you'll need:

- A basket
- Household items
- Natural items
- Materials and clothing
- Craft items

## What you do:

1. The list for what to include in your sensory baskets really is endless! Prepare the basket with interesting, differently shaped items for the children to explore.
2. For the youngest, you're best to start off with around five items so as not to overload them, but there really is no limit as the children get older.
3. The items will help your youngest to explore different materials and to start to understand the world around them.





# Composting

 **Age group:** 22 m - 60 m

 **Activity length:** N/A

 **Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 1

The magic of watching food leftovers turn into soil is the perfect way to foster curiosity amongst your little ones about the outside world.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Understanding  
CL - Listening and attention  
PD - Moving and handling  
PD - Health and self-care  
UW - The world

## What you'll need:

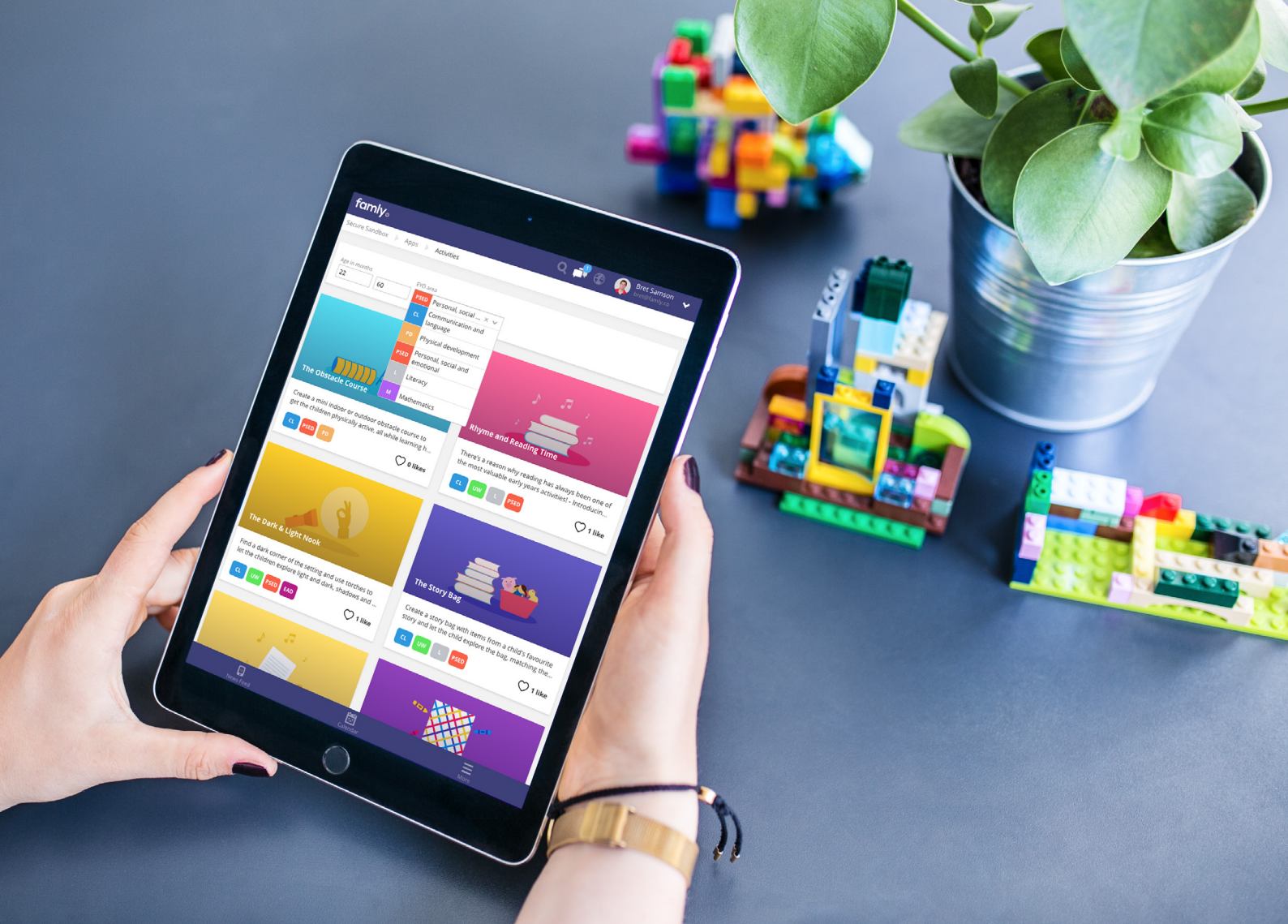
- Leftover food waste
- A compost container
- A drill

## What you do:

1. Take a bin or large container and drill some holes into the side of it.
2. After lunches and snacks, help the children to separate out their food waste from their non-biodegradable containers and other bits. This helps to teach the children some self-care but also the difference between food waste and other types of waste.
3. Get the children to carry the waste out to the compost bin. If you want to speed up the process then you can also add some soil. It should work better in the hot summer months.
4. It might take a while for the compost to develop, but it should be a good lesson in patience for the children too. Once it's ready you can use the compost to plant some plants, flowers or vegetables with the children to bring the lesson full cycle.







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# Woodpile Wildlife Wonders



**Age group:** 30 m - 50 m



**Activity length:** 30 mins - 1 hr



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

## EYFS areas:

UW - The world

PD - Moving and handling

Create a simple woodpile in order to attract more wildlife to the garden.

## What you'll need:

- Wood cuttings
- A shady spot outdoors
- A bucket (optional)

## What you do:

1. Take some wood cuttings and sticks from trees, shrubs or other herbaceous plants. Logs about an adult fist-wide with the bark still on are perfect. If you want to go with thicker logs, contact a local tree surgeon to see if they have some logs you could take.
2. Find a shady spot and pile the wood up. You don't want the spot to be too cold, but the shade will help keep everything damp.
3. Over time, the decaying wood will start to attract insects and other wildlife into your setting, a great way for the little ones to explore nature in any space.
4. If you're particularly short on space, a bucket with holes in can be loaded up with small twigs and leaves and it'll do a good job of attracting insects too.







# The Holiday Bear



Age group: 30 m - 60 m



Activity length: 15 - 30 min



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 1

Choose a holiday bear or other toy that gets to travel with children when they go on a short trip or holiday.

## EYFS areas:

PSED - Self-confidence and self-awareness

PSED - Making relationships

UW - People and communities

UW - Technology

EAD - Being imaginative

## What you'll need:

- A favourite soft toy
- Some willing families

## What you do:

1. Designate one or more soft toy(s) as the official Holiday Bear or Animal.
2. The children can take it in turns to take the animal away when they go on a holiday, short day trip, or even just to visit their family.
3. Encourage parents to get the children to take photos of themselves with the animal, helping them to improve their understanding of technology.
4. When the kids are back at the setting they can share their experiences with their friends, helping each child to gain a better self-awareness but also to understand the lives of their peers and the communities they live in.





# The Guest Visit

 **Age group:** 40 m - 60 m

 **Activity length:** N/A

 **Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 3

## EYFS areas:

UTW - People and communities

CL - Listening and attention

CL - Understanding

Extend your preschoolers understanding of their local community by asking guest visitors to come in.

## What you'll need:

- A guest visitor
- A few attentive little ones

## What you do:

1. Find a guest visitor. Any local animal experts are likely to go down well, but you can also choose local inspirational figures like fire or police officers, chefs or gardeners.
2. The most important part when choosing a guest visitor is that they can do something that is engaging and the kids can get hands-on with. You don't want a boring lecture for the little ones. This is why animal experts tend to be perfect!
3. Don't assume that children understand how to frame the right questions, so help to model question-asking by having plenty prepared that you can step in and ask yourself.
4. Done well, a guest visitor can help to introduce the kids to aspects of their wider community and be the spark of inspiration for plenty of exciting play afterwards.





# The Old Computer



**Age group:** 40 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 1 hr+



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 4

Got access to a dead old computer or keyboard? Whatever it is, tinkering with real-life tech is the best thing for your curious preschoolers.

## What you'll need:

- An old computer
- Different kinds of screwdrivers

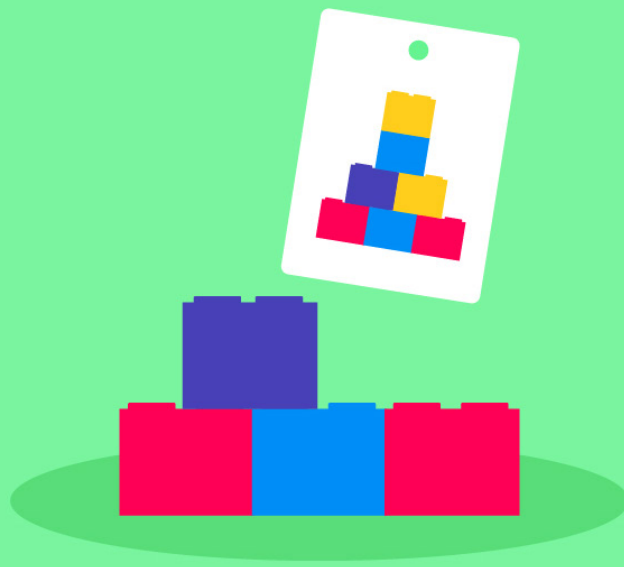
## What you do:

1. For children of this age, an adult will most likely need to remove the larger components from the computer, as it can be a little dangerous to have them working on the whole thing.
2. Once you've got some smaller components out, allow the children a bit of free reign with the screwdrivers. Try to encourage them to think methodically and carefully about what they're doing.
3. The focus that you'll see in children with tasks like this is like nothing else, and there's nothing more fascinating for a curious tinkerer than to get to see the inside workings of a giant computer.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
PD - Moving and handling  
UW - Technology  
EAD - Exploring and using media and materials





# Lego Tower Cards



**Age group:** 22 m - 50 m



**Activity length:** 15 - 30 min



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

Improve pattern recognition and counting by creating tower guidelines for children to follow when they build their own towers.

## What you'll need:

- Paper cards
- Coloured pencils
- LEGO blocks

## What you do:

1. Prepare some suggestion cards by drawing and colouring lego block towers on pieces of card with specific colour patterns.
2. Leave them by your LEGO resources, and encourage children to try and recreate the patters with their own real-life LEGO block towers.
3. Great for pattern recognition and counting, you can get the children to help make the cards to begin with too.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Understanding  
PD - Moving and handling  
M - Numbers  
M - Shape, space and measures  
EAD - Being imaginative





# Missing Numer Pegs



Age group: 22 m - 60 m



Activity length: 15 -30 min



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 2

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling

M - Numbers

Get kids to peg on the missing number in this simple but fun counting exercise.

## What you'll need:

- Craft sticks
- Sharpies
- Clothes pegs

## What you do:

1. Start by drawing numbers one to ten on a craft stick, making sure to miss out and leave space for one of the numbers each time.
2. Take the clothes pegs and draw the numbers from one to ten on the outside of the part that usually attaches to the clothes.
3. Lay everything out for the kids and see if they can fill in the blanks by attaching the clothes pegs to the right part of the craft stick.
4. Perfect for their number recognition, you get the kids to work on the fine motor control while you're at it.





# Smack The Number



**Age group:** 22 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 15 - 30 mins



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

Roll a dice and let the children find the right number sticky note with a fly swatter.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Understanding

M - Numbers

PSED - Managing feelings and behaviour

## What you'll need:

- Dice
- Fly swatters
- Small sticky notes

## What you do:

1. Prepare some sticky notes with different numbers on and place them in front of the children.
2. Give each child a fly swatter and roll the dice.
3. The aim of the game is for the little ones to identify the number on the dice and match it with the right number before smacking the correct answer with the fly swatter.
4. There's obviously some danger involved with a bunch of little ones armed with fly swatters. Start with a very small group and use it as an exercise in following instructions.





# Crack the Egg



Age group: 30 m - 60 m



Activity length: 15 - 30 min



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 1

## EYFS areas:

M - Numbers

PD - Moving and handling

Create paper eggs and let the kids crack it by punching the right number of holes in each piece.

## What you'll need:

- Paper
- Pens
- Scissors
- Hole punches

## What you do:

1. Start by cutting out some egg shapes from pieces of paper or card, before writing different numbers on them.
2. Get the children to use the hole punch and try to punch out the correct number of holes for the number. Perfect for number recognition and matching as well as those all-important fine motor skills.





# Splish Splash Water Play



Age group: 8 m - 60 m



Activity length: 30 min - 1 hr



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 3

Fun for all ages with this multi-sensory activity that lets children explore and learn.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
PD - Moving and handling  
EAD - Exploring using media and materials

## What you'll need:

- Pots or buckets
- A water tray
- A waterproof mat
- Sponges and water toys (optional)
- Bubbles and food colouring (optional)

## What you do:

1. Outdoors - Lay out some pots or buckets filled with water and an array of toys, sponges, and other things that can float.
2. Indoors - If you're taking it indoors, you're better to start with a small water tray to place the toys in and a waterproof mat to protect the floor.
3. For the younger children and babies you'll need to supervise them more closely, but it is the perfect activity for them to explore different textures and practice their visual tracking, motor and attention skills.
4. The babies will love it if you blow bubbles and let them float on the water. Otherwise let them be free to splash about, grab toys and explore this new environment.
5. For older children, you can set them some water play challenges. Get them to craft floating boats, explore floating and sinking, and get them to try and build a dam.
6. Water play tends to have a calming effect on most children, and it's great for SEN teaching due to the multi-sensory aspect.







# Finger Stories

 **Age group:** 0 m - 26 m

 **Activity length:** 15 - 30 mins

 **Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 1

Favourite finger stories like 'Where is thumbkin' and 'Round and round the garden' are perfect for developing little brains.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
CL - Understanding  
CL - Speaking  
PSED - Managing feelings and behaviour  
UW - People and communities

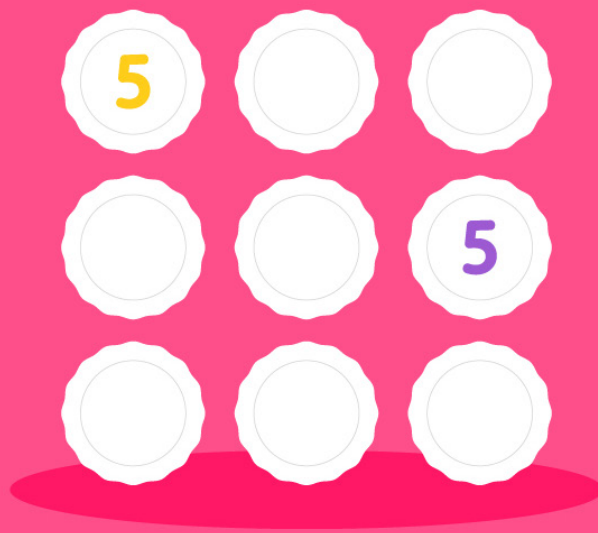
## What you'll need:

- Your fingers
- A few memorised songs

## What you do:

1. Get your practitioners to learn short, engaging, repetitive finger stories like 'Where is thumbkin', 'A little flea went walking', or 'Round and round the garden'.
2. These stories involve simple, repeating lines that create a narrative, but are also related to the movement of the practitioner's fingers and hands.
3. It's great for developing attention and interaction skills with the youngest children, and they also learn to anticipate an event and develop their understanding of patterns and routines.
4. Even if the babies do not understand the words yet, the visual cues from the practitioner's hands will be engaging and prepare them for joining in when they're older.
5. Eye contact and exaggerated facial expressions are really important non-verbal cues to help develop understanding of emotions within every child.





# Big Alphabet Memory Game



**Age group:** 40 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 15 - 30 mins



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

This twist on the classic memory game is a perfect way to improve letter recognition with your eldest.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
CL - Understanding  
PSED - Making relationships  
L - Reading  
M - Numbers

## What you'll need:

- 24+ paper plates
- A pen

## What you do:

1. Take 24 paper plates (or more if you like) and write 12 different letters on each paper plate, making sure that there's a matching plate for every letter you choose.
2. Lay out the 24 paper plates randomly in a 4x6 grid, and get children to take it in turns to choose two plates each and turn them over.
3. If the numbers match, they get to keep those two plates! If not, they have to turn the plates back over in the right place.
4. The game is all about remembering the letters you've seen before and matching them up with new ones you discover. Great for growing memories and practising turn taking all while helping them to recognise letters.





# The DIY Telephone



**Age group:** 40 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 1 hr+



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 3

Who hasn't explored the wonders of two cups and a piece of string? Technology, creativity, speaking and listening - this activity has it all.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
CL - Speaking  
PD - Moving and handling  
PSED - Making relationships  
UW - Technology  
EAD - Being imaginative

## What you'll need:

- Cleaned out plastic cups
- Rope or string
- Metal marbles
- Magnets
- Paint

## What you do:

1. It all starts with the decorating. Give each child a plastic cup, a magnet and a marble.
2. Then show them how they can dip the marble in various pots of paint and use the magnet to move the marble around the inside of the cup. Let them make their own paint choices and patterns and you'll have some highly concentrated little faces.
3. Once the plastic cups have dried, make a hole in two different cups and connect them with the rope and a couple of knots.
4. Get the kids to explore what happens when they go far away and speak quietly into the cups - the noise should travel down the rope to the little ear at the other end.
5. Get the children to explore more options and experiment. Will a glass marble work in the same way? Will a thinner or thicker rope work better? There's plenty of learning opportunities in this simple activity!





# Story Stones



**Age group:** 30 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 30 min - 1 hr



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

Use stickers to create these engaging story stones that act as a great starting point for imaginative, storytelling play.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
CL - Understanding  
CL - Speaking  
PSED - Self-confidence and self-awareness  
UW - The world

## What you'll need:

- Large smooth stones
- Stickers

## What you do:

1. Start by making a few story stones yourself, by selecting a few large, smooth stones and putting stickers on them. These could be animals, characters, or features of an environment like trees or mountains.
2. Make sure you have plenty of leftover stones and stickers and gather some children to start a story.
3. Use your existing story to build a starting point to the story, then open it up to the children. Let them make the next character by applying the stickers to the stones.
4. Once the children understand the concept, use open-ended questions so that they can help to develop the next part to the story. Where is the character going? Who will he meet?
5. Afterwards, you can leave the story stones out as part of your continuous provision and you may find the children starting to craft their own stories independently.





# Tummy Time Sensory Bags



**Age group:** 0 m - 11 m



**Activity length:** 15 - 30 min



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

Getting babies to explore while they're on their tummies develops crucial strength. But how do you keep it safe when they want to put everything in their mouths?

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling  
M - Shape, space, and measures  
L - Writing  
UW - The world  
UW - Technology  
EAD - Exploring and using materials

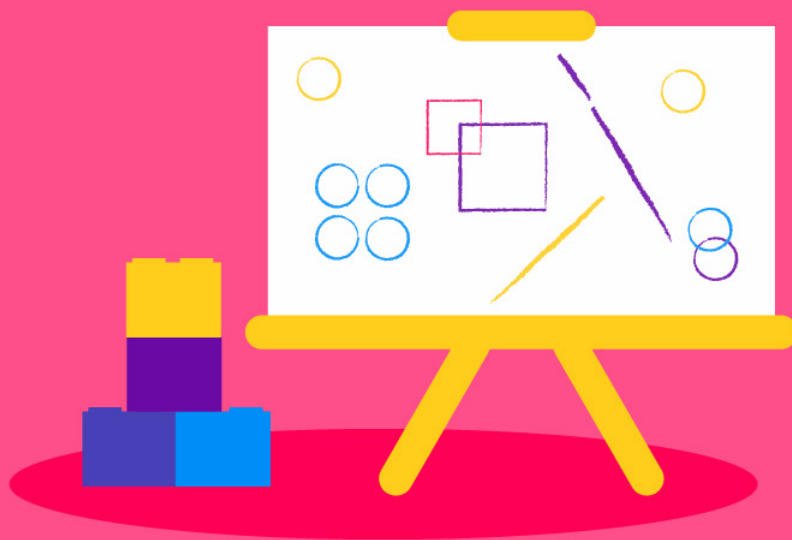
## What you'll need:

- Large sandwich bags
- Tape
- Background items like oil, rice or sand
- Feature items like buttons, beads or glitter

## What you do:

1. Start by filling up a large sandwich bag with the background item for your babies to explore. This might be something like oil, rice, sand, shaving cream, or crushed crackers. These form the background substance for the sensory play.
2. After this, you can add small featured items for the babies to find and explore within the background items. These might be things like buttons, beads, glitter, marbles, or seashells.
3. Tape the bag down to the ground to make sure all the items are safely sealed in and stay in place while the little ones explore.
4. Place the child on their tummy to explore the bag, as this can help with crucial muscle and motor development as they happily explore in a safe way, without putting anything into their mouths!





# LEGO Painting



**Age group:** 22 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 30 min - 1 hr



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 3

Did you think LEGO bricks were just for building?  
Turns out they make pretty good paint brushes too...

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling

PD - Health and self-care

EAD - Exploring and using  
media and materials

EAD- Being imaginative

## What you'll need:

- LEGO
- Washable paint
- A paper plate
- Paper

## What you do:

1. Start by squirting various colours onto a paper plate and encourage the children to dip their pieces into the paint.
2. The kids can stamp, roll or press the LEGO pieces into the paper, or do whatever they like to create their masterpieces!
3. Car wheels and different shapes are particularly great, but any LEGO pieces should work. Just make sure the children have a range of textures and colours to play with.
4. The waterproof paint should come off little fingers very easily, and getting the paint off is an important part of the self-care journey.





# Toilet Paper Roll Hairdressing



**Age group:** 22 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 15 - 30 min



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

Re-use some old toilet paper roll tubes and let your little ones express themselves as crafty hairdressers.

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling  
EAD - Exploring and using media and materials  
EAD - Being imaginative

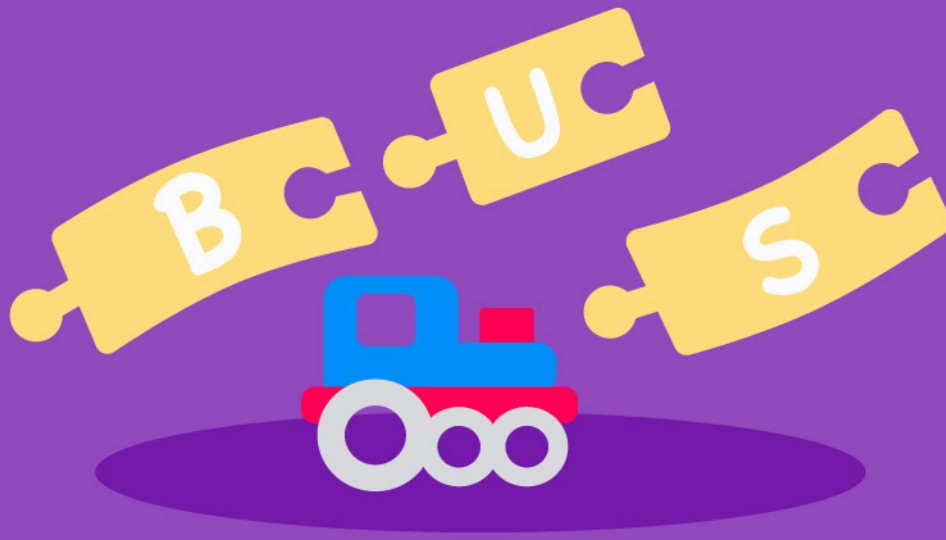
## What you'll need:

- Toilet paper roll tubes
- A pen
- Scissors




## What you do:

1. Start by having the children draw or paint a face on the bottom half of the toilet paper roll tube. Younger children can help by sticking on googly eyes and use finger paint to draw a face.
2. The children can then cut different 'hair styles' into the top half of the tube. Make sure that the children can handle scissors safely before letting them cut and supervise them.
3. Younger children could glue or stick short bits of straws on the top half of the tube or cut with hand-over hand support by an adult.





# Train Track Words

-  **Age group:** 30 m - 60 m
-  **Activity length:** 15 - 30 mins
-  **Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 3

## EYFS areas:

PSED - Making relationships  
L - Reading  
L - Writing

If your kids loving playing with the classic train tracks, this is a great way to get basic word building into the mix.

## What you'll need:

- Wooden train tracks
- Blank stickers
- A Pen

## What you do:

1. Start by getting your older ones to write some letters on stickers. You can also do this one yourself. Just make sure you've got plenty of vowels so that the kids can actually form words.
2. Once you've done this, you can stick the stickers onto various train tracks, and ask the children to see if they can form some basic words for the trains to go over.
3. If that's a bit advanced for the children, consider making the words yourself as they play to help with early letter and word recognition.







# The Alphabet Museum

 Age group: 30 m - 60 m

 Activity length: N/A

 Set-up difficulty (1-5): 5

Great as part of your continuous provision as well as a brilliant resource for plenty of fun letter related games.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
CL - Understanding  
L - Reading  
UW - The world

## What you'll need:

- 24 old boxes
- Coloured paper
- 24+ related items

## What you do:

1. Start with a random assortment of boxes. Old shoe boxes, delivery boxes, food cartons - they'll all work. You need 24, one for each letter of the alphabet. Take one side off each box.
2. Take your coloured paper and print (or draw if you're a calligraphy expert) a big letter on each one. Cut them to fit in the back of the boxes and stack them up so that the children can see all the big letters next to each other.
3. Find 24 or more items that match each letter. This might be a toy bird for B, a plant for P, some glasses for G - whatever you can find lying around. This is your very first game to play with the children - so get them involved.
4. Once you've set the library up, it can be a great visual aid for children learning their spelling as well as a great starting off point for more literacy fun and games. For example you could hide some of the objects and get them to 'Go and find an H'.





# The Letter Wheel



Age group: 40 m - 60 m



Activity length: N/A



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 3

## EYFS areas:

L - Reading

UW - The world

Out and about or on a day trip? These letter wheels are perfect to help kids explore the world around them and learn their letters on the go.

## What you'll need:

- Paper plates
- A pen
- Scissors

## What you do:

1. Begin by writing all the letters of the alphabet around the edge of the paper plates.
2. Next, cut two incisions on either side of the letters so that each letter can be folded into the centre of the paper plate.
3. When you're out and about, on a day trip or even just in the nursery, give the plate to a child and see if they can tick off each letter by folding it down when they see something that starts with that letter. It should help them to engage with the world around them even more inquisitively, and learn their letters as they go.





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## Duplo Spelling



Age group: 30 m - 60 m



Activity length: 15 - 30 min



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 2

### EYFS areas:

L- Reading

L - Writing

Trying to get your kids to understand basic words by getting them to match up letters?

This is the perfect activity!

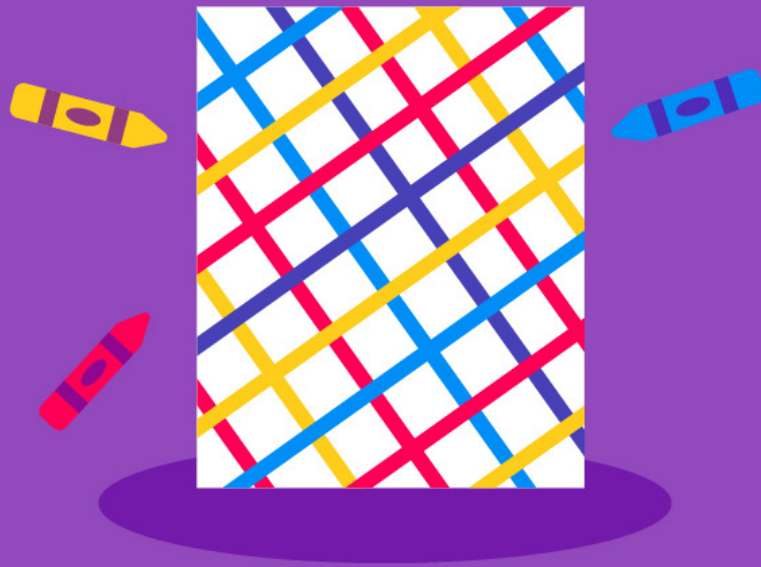
### What you'll need:

- Wipeable marker
- Single Duplo blocks
- Long Duplo blocks

### What you do:

1. Start by writing some simple, 2-4 letter words on the longer bricks, and then make sure the individual letters are written on corresponding, individual bricks.
2. Give the children the two sets and see if they can match the words by putting the right letter bricks above the corresponding letters in the word.





# The Big Group Quilt

 **Age group: 16 m - 60 m**

 **Activity length: 1hr +**

 **Set-up difficulty (1-5): 3**

A big piece of paper and some tape is all you need for this creative, cooperative activity.

## EYFS areas:

PSED - Self-confidence

PSED - Managing feelings and behaviour

PSED - Making relationships

L - Writing

EAD - Being Imaginative

## What you'll need:

- A large sheet of paper (A1 or A0)
- Multiple coloured tape
- Crayons, pens and pencils

## What you do:

1. Start by taking the large sheet of paper and placing tape diagonally across one side at regular intervals.
2. Now do the same on the other side, creating lots of separate diamond boxes like a quilt.
3. Now let the children go wild on their own little square. They can colour in, make shapes, or make marks however they like.
4. Emphasise the importance of this as a group activity, creating something together, and keeping each child to their own square. It should be a powerful lesson in what you can create when you work together!





# How Many LEGO Pieces Long?



Age group: 22 m - 60 m



Activity length: 15 - 30 mins



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 1

This great guessing game gives kids a chance to test out their predictive skills using this classic resource.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Understanding

PD - Moving and handling

M - Numbers

M - Shape, space and measures

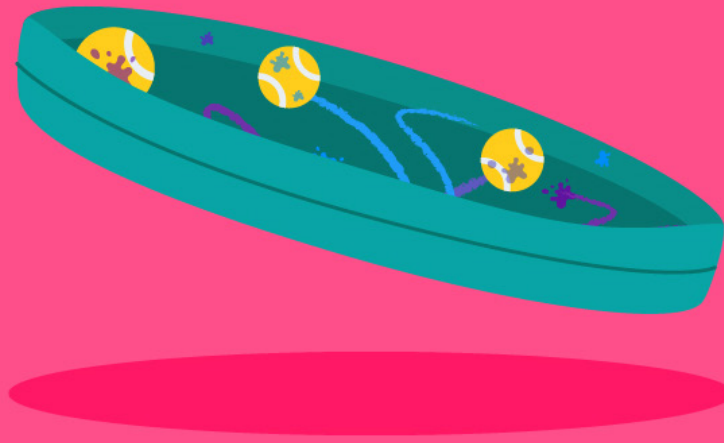
## What you'll need:

- Duplo blocks
- LEGO blocks
- Things to measure

## What you do:

1. Start the game off by getting your children to measure one of their favourite toys. How many pieces long was it?
2. This is your starting off point for lots of fun with open-ended questions and experimenting. Ask questions like 'Do you think this will be more or fewer LEGO blocks long?', 'Are you taller or shorter than these two things?' and so on.
3. For the younger children, this is a great activity for teaching early counting skills. For example, you could tap each of the LEGO blocks in turn while counting, helping to teach them that units correspond to numbers and that each number has a name.
4. For the older children, you can even see if they can guess exactly how many bricks it will be, and build up the tension as you make the measurement!





# Group Tennis Ball Painting



**Age group:** 40 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 15 - 30 min



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 4

This fun, physical painting activity is the perfect outdoors teamwork game.

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling  
PD - Health and self-care  
PSED - Self-confidence  
PSED - Making relationships  
EAD - Exploring and using media and materials

## What you'll need:

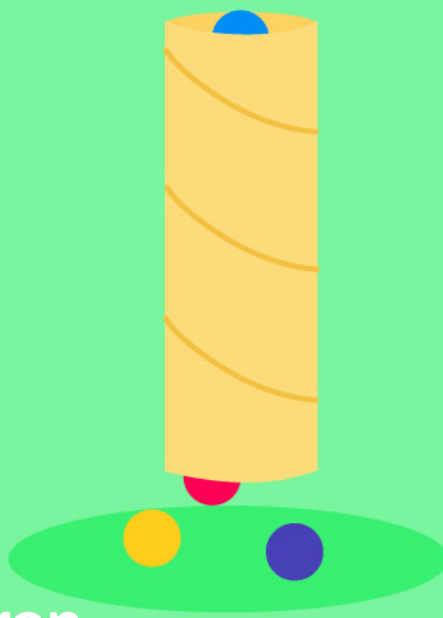
- 1 small plastic pool
- Washable paint
- Tennis balls
- Tongs
- Large sheets of paper (around A1)

## What you do:

1. Start by filling up the pool with a piece of paper and getting those tennis balls nice and painty!
2. Allow the children to work together to get the tennis balls into the pool using the tongs.
3. After that, it's all about teamwork. The more the children work together to move the ball around, the more fun they're going to have.
4. The tongs are great for fine motor skills, while working together on rolling the balls around to create their masterpiece will work wonders for the children's strength and teamwork.







# The Pom Pom Drop



Age group: 8 m - 36 m



Activity length: 15 - 30 min



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 2

Understanding how things can disappear and come back is central to early mathematical development, making this simple activity a winner for your littlest ones.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention

PD - Moving and handling

M - Numbers

M - Shapes, space and measures

UW - The world

## What you'll need:

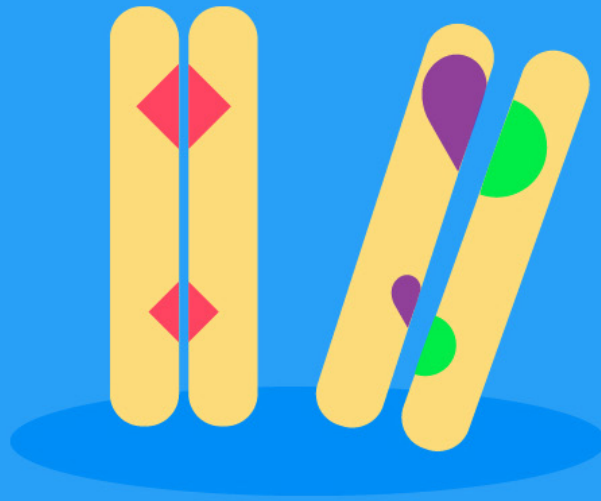
- Paper roll tube
- Craft pom poms
- Tape
- A container

## What you do:

1. Tape the tube to the wall and show how the pom pom can travel down the tube when you put it in at the top, collecting at the bottom.
2. For the youngest, this lesson in cause and effect will also develop their fine motor skills, and should be fascinating.
3. Some children might not have the concentration for this yet. If they just want to pull the tube off the wall, park the game for a bit and try it again in a few months.
4. Extend the activity by showing them what happens when you tilt the tube instead (of course, it's going to change the speed) and try to set up a slightly more complicated run of toilet tubes for the older children.







# Craft Stick Shape Matching



Age group: 30 m - 60 m



Activity length: 15 - 30 mins



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 2

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention

M - Shapes, spaces and measures

Give the older ones a great grasp of shapes and space with this simple shape matching activity.

## What you'll need:

- Craft sticks
- Coloured pens

## What you do:

1. Take two craft sticks and make various symmetrical shapes across the two sticks, so that the shape is only made full when the sticks are put together.
2. Leave the sticks for children to explore, and start off by guiding them on how to put them together to make a full shape.
3. It'll work best if you make at least two shapes on each set of sticks to give the children two reference points. Start by helping them get the sticks the right way round so they're only working in 2D.
4. After they've mastered the activity, you can jumble the sticks up and challenge them to get the sticks the right way round rather than simply matching them in 2D.





# Number Trays

 Age group: 22 m - 60 m

 Activity length: N/A

 Set-up difficulty (1-5): 4

Prepare trays organised around certain numbers as a great resource for a whole variety of maths fun.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Understanding

M - Numbers

M - Shape, space and measures

UW - The world

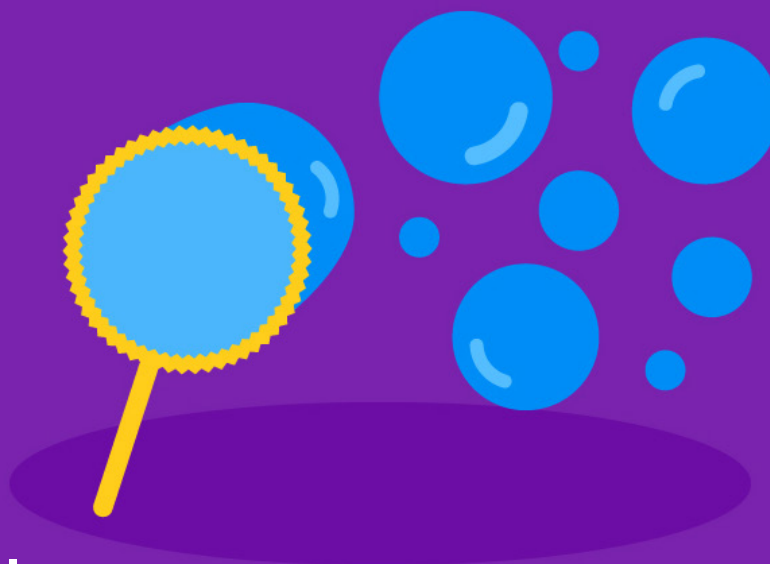
## What you'll need:

- Trays
- Foam numbers
- Dice
- Various items, drawings and shapes

## What you do:

1. The whole idea with this activity is to develop a resource that children can explore freely, and which you can use as a starting point for questions and problem-solving.
2. To start you need a tray and a few items representing the number itself, such as foam numbers, numerals or dice.
3. From here you can be as abstract or as simple as you like. You could have related letters, toys, numbers of things, animals toys with that number of legs, playing cards or shapes with the right number of sides.
4. These can start out as something to explore, but afterwards you can start to ask questions about why certain things are on there or what else you could include from around the setting too.





# Giant Bubbles

 **Age group: 22 m - 60 m**

 **Activity length: 30 mins - 1 hr**

 **Set-up difficulty (1-5): 3**

These giant bubbles will leave your kids full of wonder and excitement.

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling  
PD - Health and self-care  
M - Shape, space and measures  
UW - Technology  
EAD - Exploring and using media and materials

## What you'll need:

- 1 litre of water (hot)
- 250ml of quality washing up liquid
- 2-4 tablespoons of glycerine (find it in the baking aisle)
- Straws
- String

## What you do:

1. To make the bubble recipe, mix all of the liquid ingredients carefully and slowly so as to avoid making bubbles during the mixing process.
2. Leave the mixture for at least an hour (or even overnight).
3. Make your bubble wands by attaching two straws together with a piece of string at either end. The string should be roughly 8 times the length of the straws.
4. Let the kids go wild outside, dipping the bubble wands in the mixture and then running around to let the wind make the bubbles. The mixture might start off a bit weak but it should improve as you play.
5. The bubbles should give the kids plenty of food for thought on technology and shapes, while the mixing process is great to develop their measuring skills.
6. The activity is also perfect for developing social skills as the children collaborate and it's also great for safety awareness too as you explain that the bubbles are not for eating and might hurt their eyes.





# The Human Sundial



Age group: 22 m - 60 m



Activity length: N/A



Set-up difficulty (1-5): 1

This simple science experiment utilising the sun and shadows is the perfect starting point for lots of fantastic conversations

## EYFS areas:

PSED - Self-confidence

PSED - Making relationships

UW - The world

UW - Technology

M - Shape, space, and measures

L - Writing

## What you'll need:

- Chalk
- The Sun!

## What you do:

1. The idea of this one is to teach the kids a little something about perspective and the world around them!
2. Make sure you have a sunny spot with plenty of space for long shadows and nothing creating its own shadows on your spot.
3. On a sunny day, get one of your children to stand on a certain spot and then have the other children draw their shadow on the ground in chalk.
4. Later on in the day, try again. How has the shadow changed? What's been going on? It's a great starting off point for all sorts of interesting questions and learning opportunities.





# Planting Seeds



**Age group:** 8 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 30 mins - 1 hr



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 3

Planting seeds will be great for fine motor control and even better to get kids learning about the natural world around them.

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
PD - Moving and handling  
PD - Health and self-care  
UW - The world

## What you'll need:

- Seeds
- Starter pots
- Water
- Compost
- Spoons

## What you do:

1. Start by picking out your seeds. Sunflowers, and sweet peas work well at the start of spring, as well as nasturtiums and calendula for attracting pollinating bees and butterflies.
2. All you need to do is fill a seed starter pot with compost, water it, and pop the seeds in an inch or so down using a spoon. You can reuse some shop-bought starter pots or use old cartons, egg boxes or old fruit peel.
3. Keep the packets! They'll be packed full of information that you can discuss with the children such as what conditions work best for the plants, the differences between different plants and why some will flower sooner than others.





## Mini-Me Local Area Play

 **Age group: 16 m - 60 m**

 **Activity length: N/A**

 **Set-up difficulty (1-5): 5**

Creating your own mini version of the local area is the perfect way to get children talking about the people and communities around your setting.

### EYFS areas:

CL - Understanding

UW - People and communities

PSED - Managing feelings and behaviour

PSED - Making relationships

M - Shapes, space and measures

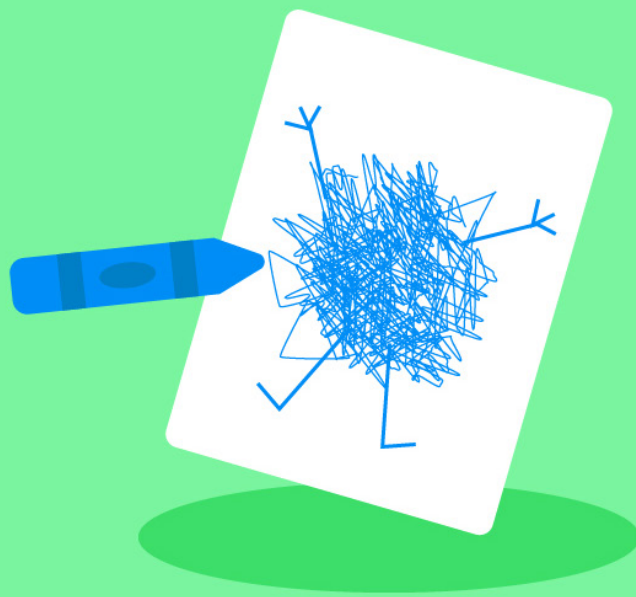
### What you'll need:

- A spare table
- Some coloured plastic sheeting
- Toy buildings and vehicles
- Mini-me figurines

### What you do:

1. This one might be an effort to make, but it's worth it if you want your children to be talking more about their community.
2. In essence, you can build up a central road, with buildings and vehicles dotted around. These could be toys or even local buildings printed from google maps and then laminated and stuck to bits of board.
3. The children can also make or customise mini-me figurines which they can move around the town.
4. It's perfect for endless discussion on children's knowledge of people and communities, like 'Me and daddy go to WH Smith's to buy colouring things'.
5. You can also consider changing or adding buildings after a trip to keep it at the top of children's minds.





# Scribbling and Mark-Making



**Age group:** 0 m - 36 m



**Activity length:** 30 mins - 1 hr



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 1

Getting children started with scribbling and mark-making is central to creating confident writers when they grow up.

## EYFS areas:

L - Writing

PD - Moving and handling

EAD - Exploring and using media and materials

EAD - Being imaginative

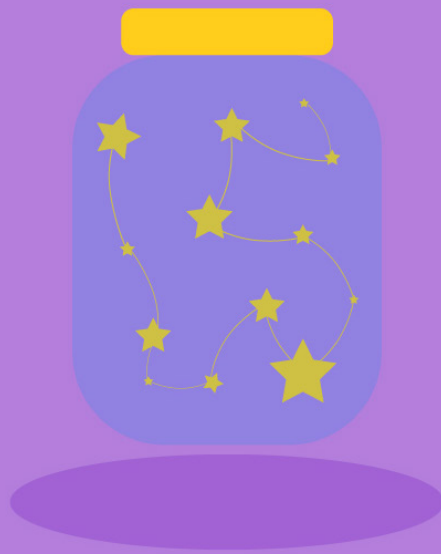
## What you'll need:

- Paper
- Crayons
- Pens
- Paint
- Modelling clay

## What you do:

1. Encouraging children of all ages to start making marks is crucial for their development.
2. With the youngest, they will start by discovering that their movements can make marks on the page, but as they grow, they'll start to be able to give shape and maybe even meaning to the marks they make.
3. At the earliest stages, it's important that children are able to explore the sensory experience. The feeling of crayons, the smell of paint, the roughness of the paper.
4. It might be that very young or SEN children don't have the fine motor skills necessary or just lack interest. In this case, you could try out finger painting or getting them to draw using their finger dipped in water on the pavement outside.
5. It could be that the sensory overload is a little too much, and some younger children will seem to not be interested in art activities at all. That's fine, just make sure you routinely come round to it every month or so to check in and allow them to explore it when they're ready.





# The Jar of Light



**Age group:** 0 m - 26 m



**Activity length:** 30 mins - 1 hr



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

A plastic jar filled with fairy lights can be an utterly fascinating resource for babies and toddlers alike.

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling  
L - Writing  
M - Numbers  
M - Shape, space and measures  
UW - The world  
UW - Technology

## What you'll need:

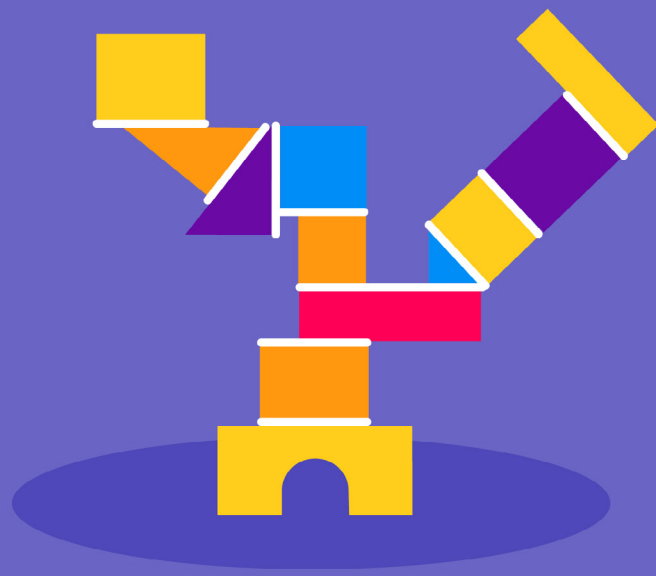
- A plastic jar
- A string of battery fairy lights

## What you do:

1. Take the fairy lights and put them inside the jar. It's helpful if they're battery or solar powered because you obviously can't have them plugged in.
2. Screw the lid on tight!
3. Allow the babies and toddlers to explore the jar with all of their senses. They can stare at it, roll it, bang it, or even put it in their mouth when they're teething.







# Velcro Blocks



**Age group:** 8 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 30 mins - 1 hr



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 3

Velcro strips can make building block towers easier for the youngest and even more challenging for the oldest!

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling  
M - Numbers  
M - Shape, space and measures  
UW - Technology  
EAD - Being imaginative

## What you'll need:

- Building blocks
- Lots of velcro strips




## What you do:

1. Start by applying velcro strips to the different sides of the building blocks. Don't forget to leave some free so the children can explore the differences.
2. Let the children go wild. It should be helpful for the youngest children who aren't yet able to properly stack the blocks. They may need a hand getting them unstuck though.
3. For the older children, they can now introduce different angles to their block building, and experiment with the effects of balance on a grander scale. Getting the velcro unstuck is good for developing stronger fine motor skills too.





# String Painting

-  **Age group:** 16 m - 60 m
-  **Activity length:** 15 min - 30 min
-  **Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 2

This new way to paint lets children explore and do things their own way.

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and Handling  
Literacy - Writing  
M - Shapes, space and measures  
EAD - exploring and using media and materials  
EAD - Being imaginative

## What you'll need:

- Paint
- String
- Scissors
- Paper

## What you do:

1. Cut short lengths of string and fill up painting pots with various colours of paint.
2. Make sure the children are properly covered up - it's about to get messy!
3. Some children might try pressing down with the string. Others might drag it across the paper or use it as a tiny paint brush. Whatever it is, they'll explore new ways to make marks and their own imagination.





# Feeding Time

 Age group: 0 m - 60 m

 Activity length: N/A

 Set-up difficulty (1-5): 3

Eating time isn't just about getting energy into your little ones, it's the perfect learning opportunity too.

## EYFS areas:

PD - Moving and handling  
PD - Health and self-care  
PSED - Managing feelings and behaviour  
PSED - Self-confidence  
PSED - Making relationships

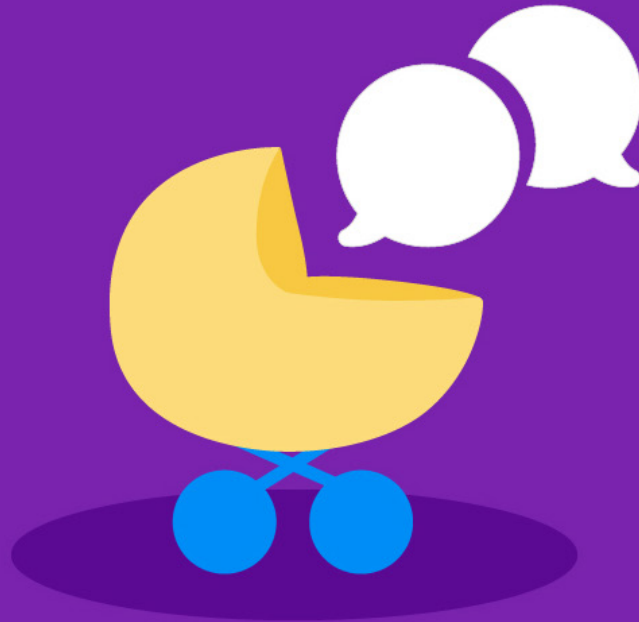
## What you'll need:

- Lots of different food!
- A few excited eaters

## What you do:

1. Promoting the health and self-care area of the EYFS for the youngest in your setting is really more about routines, help with washing, creating a clean, comfortable environment and of course an understanding of how to encourage self-feeding.
2. That's why you have to start to encourage them to feed themselves as soon as they're ready. And worry about the mess later!
3. Finger foods will also encourage better fine motor control when they're ready, and proper routines around hand-washing will help to promote good hygiene.
4. All in, don't let your eating time get too boring! Keep it fresh and make sure you encourage healthy attitudes amongst all your children.





## Feel How...



**Age group:** 0 m - 26 m



**Activity length:** 15 - 30 min



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 1

This is a game all about encouraging young children to speak and learn new concepts, by asking them to 'feel how' certain things will have certain qualities.

### EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
CL - Understanding  
CL - Speaking  
PD - Moving and handling  
UW - The world  
UW - Technology

### What you'll need:

- Toys or objects
- Material
- Whatever is around you!

### What you do:

1. When you have your baby's attention, try grabbing something close by like a toy bear and saying 'Feel how soft teddy's tummy is!'
2. This is all about encouraging them to explore words using their senses, and talking directly to them will give them confidence about their own speaking.
3. Try to keep it simple to start with and don't overload them with lots of different examples until they're ready. Keep returning to the same idea to scaffold their learning.





# Rhyme and Reading Time



**Age group:** 0 m - 60 m



**Activity length:** 15 - 30 min



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 1

There's a reason why reading has always been one of the most valuable early years activities!

## EYFS areas:

CL - Understanding

CL - Speaking

PSED - Self-confidence

PSED - Managing feelings and behaviours

PSED - Making relationships

## What you'll need:

- Some favourite books
- An attentive little one

## What you do:

1. Introducing concepts like rhyming, matching and getting children excited about reading time is central to developing competent readers when they grow up.
2. That's why it's never too early to read to the little ones. Don't forget to keep eye contact and use lots of exaggerated facial expressions so that they can develop their vocabulary and understand emotions from your non-verbal cues.





# Hide the Toy



**Age group:** 8 m - 26 m



**Activity length:** 15 - 30 min



**Set-up difficulty (1-5):** 1

**Hide toys while the little ones are watching and go on a hunt together!**

## EYFS areas:

CL - Listening and attention  
CL - Understanding  
CL - Speaking  
PSED - Making relationships  
M - Shape space and measures  
UW - The world

## What you'll need:

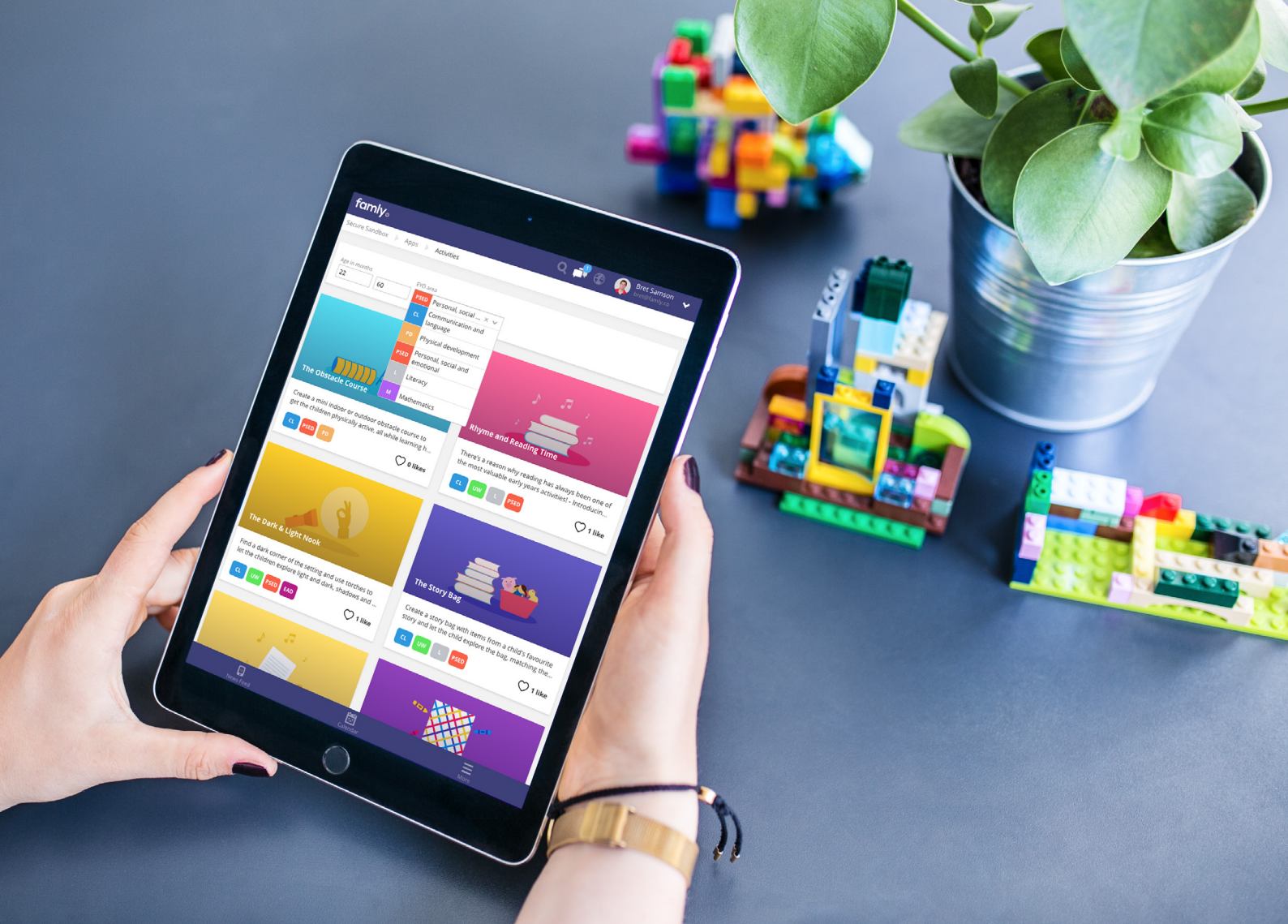
- A favourite toy
- A good hiding spot!

## What you do:

1. Hiding toys in sight of children and then asking them 'Where is the teddy bear?' is a great little game to improve communication and encourage an extended vocabulary in children.
2. It's also key to help children develop the idea of giving emotions and actions to other people or things.
3. Make sure you get involved in the hunt as much as possible with your little one. Try to let them lead to start with, but help them by pointing out and giving clues whenever you need to.







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