



Stories and Make-believe Activities

What can you do for *Fun With Children Through Stories and Make-Believe Activities*? Here are some ideas:

1. Choose a fun-friend.
2. Read a story to your fun-friend.
3. Make a picture book for your fun-friend.
4. Teach a finger game to your fun-friend.
5. Make a flannel box for your fun-friend.
6. Make a hand puppet for your fun-friend.
7. Act a story with your fun-friend.
8. Visit with your fun-friend's parent about the things you have done with the child.

After completing each activity you choose to do, write a very short story about the things you and your fun-friend have done. These stories will be your record of your 4-H project.

Choosing a Fun-Friend

Choose a little friend to have fun with in this 4-H project. We will call the friend you have chosen your "fun-friend." Your friend may be a little child you know or your little brother or sister.

You may want to choose only one child to be your fun-friend. If so, find someone you can play with often. Or if you wish, you may have a different friend for each activity. Your friend should be at least three years old but not old enough to have started first grade.

Have your parent help you decide on your friend. If you choose someone outside your own family, visit with your friend's parent to be sure she or he knows what you would like to do. Then you and your fun-friend may start on your way to some new adventures.

Stories

Story time is a happy time for little children. They like to have you read to

them because it is fun to hear stories. They like the attention you give them and feeling close to you when you are reading together. You will enjoy it too!

Millions of Cats
The Indoor Noisy Book
The Great Big Car and Truck Book

Choosing Stories

Where will you find a story to read? You may have a favorite book at home. Your little brother or sister may have one. Or maybe your fun-friend already has several story books from which you can choose one to read. You may want to read a comic book and another favorite book. You will need to read other kinds of story books too.

It will be helpful if you can visit a librarian about books that are recommended for children. Be sure to tell the librarian how old your friend is. Your leader will also be able to help you choose stories.

What will you read? Little children like to hear about animals, transportation, grownups and their work, science and nature, and about things children do. They like silly stories and those with surprises in them.

Three-year-old children like large, simple pictures with only a few words of story. They like stories about something they know about. Three minutes at a time may be as long as they care to listen.

The child four or five years old likes pictures, but there may be more story with each picture than for younger children. They are interested in more things. Include things they have seen or heard or experienced in some way. Often you can explain something new to them. Even if your friend has never seen a zebra or a helicopter your explanation will be interesting.

Be sure to choose a book which doesn't frighten a child. Fairy stories may be all right for you, but they may frighten your fun-friend. Be sure you like the story, too. Popular books for small children are:

The Very Little Dog
The Box with Red Wheels
The Color Kittens
Widget
Christmas Stocking
Lost in the Zoo
Whiffy McMann
Cinder
The Country Noisy Book
Make Way for Ducklings
Scat, Scat
Angus and the Cat

Reading Stories

Before you read to your fun-friend, you will want to read the story yourself. Read the story out loud to your parent so that you will be sure to know all the words. Look at the pictures. Think about things in the pictures you will want to show the child.

Now you are ready to share your book with your fun-friend. Pick a place that is quiet where you can sit together and be comfortable. You may sit on the floor. If you are sitting in chairs, be sure your friend's feet are resting on the floor or a foot stool. Sit with your backs to the window or lamp so that the light doesn't shine in your friend's eyes.

Read slowly. Hold the book so that both of you can see the pictures. While you read and ask questions, little children like to see the pictures. They usually want to talk about the story as you read it.

If the child leaves when you are half way through a story, try reading it at a later time or try a different kind of story. Sometimes they say, "Read it again."

If the public library in your community has a story hour for pre-school children, you may want to visit it. You could listen and see the way stories are read to the children and see the children's reactions to the stories. Share what you learn from this visit with others in your club.

Picture Books

You can make a picture book for your fun-friend. Children enjoy having books of their own which they can hold, play with, and look at again and again. Little children enjoy looking at pictures and talking about them. Younger children will point at objects, name them, and tell what sounds they make. They like to see pictures about things they know. Colored pictures are more attractive and more interesting to a child than black and white. You don't need to put any story with the pictures in your book, but you may if you wish.

Making a Picture Book

First, you will need to choose a subject for your book. Remember, a child



What size pages will you need? They should be large enough for the child to hold and turn easily. They should be a bit larger than your pictures. It is better to put only one picture on a page, so you will need one page for each picture. Pages should be all the same size.

Rubber cement is easy to work with when pasting pictures. The pictures will stay flat and smooth after the cement has dried. When pasting the pictures, be sure the edges of the pictures are pasted down well.

You will need to punch holes in the pages and fasten them together in some way so that the pages can be turned easily. A ring binder may be used or you may use yarn.

If you know how to sew, you might want to make a cloth book. Use a strong fabric such as muslin for the pages and stitch them together to form a book. Trim the edges with pinking shears so they will not ravel. Simple pictures can be made from colorful "cut-outs" of other fabrics. These could be either glued or stitched in place on the cloth pages.

likes books about things that are familiar. You may know of things which your fun-friend especially likes. Some subjects from which you may wish to choose are:

- | | | |
|-----------|----------|----------|
| Animals | Boats | Babies |
| Cars | Trains | Children |
| Airplanes | Tractors | Toys |

Look for colorful and interesting pictures of the subject you have chosen in old magazines or catalogs and cut them out.

Each member of your club may want to choose a different subject for a book. Your club members could help one another find pictures, or you can share some of the pictures you find.

How many pictures should you choose? Four to eight are plenty for a younger child, but you may want a few more for an older child. Choose pictures which are all about the same size. If you have some large and some small pictures, you may want to make two books instead of putting them all in one.

The pages of the book should be easy for a child to handle, and they should tear easily. Use heavy paper or thin cardboard for them.

Sharing Your Picture Book

Share your picture book with your fun-friend. Remember to choose a quiet place where you can sit together. You may want to read again the other suggestions given for reading stories on page 2, because many of them will be helpful here, too. Talk about the pictures with your friend. Encourage your friend to talk about the pictures. Explain that the book is to keep.

Finger Games

Children like to play games. Finger games help children learn new words. They also help them learn numbers. You can use the games to get children's attention when they want to do something they aren't supposed to do.

Finger games have some advantages over more organized games. They can be used with younger children. They can be used in quiet play periods. They can be played with one child or with several children. The child does not need to wait a turn, because everyone plays together.

Do you remember what fun it was to play finger games when you were a small child? Now you will enjoy helping your fun-friend learn to play them.

Teaching a Finger Game

A finger game is a poem or song with finger motions. Little children usually learn only one thing at a time. When you are teaching a finger game, they probably will just make the motions while you say or sing the words. After the motions are learned, they will be able to combine the words and motions. After awhile, they may want to say the words and go through the motions "all by myself."

Don't confuse younger children by teaching two finger games at one time. Older children may ask you if you know more games. Judge how much you can teach by how well your friend remembers the first game.

Be sure you have memorized the words and motions of the finger game you plan to teach. Practice by teaching it to the other members of your club.

Here are a few finger games. Choose one to teach to the rest of your club and to your fun-friend. Choose one of these or one you have learned from your parents, your leader, or someone else.

JACK IN THE BOX

Jack in the box all shut up tight
Down in the dark without any light
(Make hand into fist--thumb inside)
Open the box
And up jumps Jack! *(Pop thumb out)*

HERE'S A BALL

Here's a ball *(Make a circle with thumb and forefinger)*
And here's a ball *(Make a circle with thumbs and middle fingers of both hands)*
And a great big ball I see *(Arms over head to make a big circle)*
Shall we count them?
Let me hear you
One, two, three *(Make the three different size balls as you count)*

TWO LITTLE HOUSES

Two little houses all closed up tight
(Both fists closed)
Open the windows and let in the light
(Open up hands)
Ten little finger people, tall and straight
(Fingers standing up)
Ready for school at half past eight



JACK AND JILL

Two little black birds sitting on a hill
One named Jack (*Hold up index finger*)
The other named Jill (*Hold up index
finger on other hand*)
Fly away Jack (*Put hand behind back*)
Fly away Jill (*Other hand behind back*)
Come back Jack (*Bring hand out*)
Come back Jill (*Bring other hand out*)

HERE'S A BEE HIVE

Here's a bee hive. Where are the bees?
(*Clasp fist*)
Away inside where nobody sees.
Here they come out of the hive.
One, two, three, four, five.
(*Open fist, one finger at a time*)
Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.
(*Wave hand through the air*)

TEN LITTLE PIGEONS

Ten little pigeons sat in a line (*Hands
stretched up over head*)
Up on the barn in the warm sunshine
Ten little pigeons flew down to the ground
(*Flutter fingers down*)
And ate up the crumbs that were lying
around
Ten little pigeons flew back in a line
(*Fly fingers back up above head*)
Up on the barn in the warm sunshine

TEN LITTLE FINGERS

I have ten little fingers and they all
belong to me
I can make them do things, would you
like to see?
I can shut them up tight (*Shut them up
into fists*)
I can open them wide (*Open them wide*)
I can put them together and make them
all hide (*Close fists together*)
I can make them jump high (*Swing hands
above head*)
I can make them go low (*Swing hands down
low*)
I can fold them together and hold them
just so (*Fold hands and put in lap!*)

Flannel Box

Have you ever seen a flannel box? It
is a box covered with cotton flannel fabric.
Inside the box are pictures and things that
stick on the flannel.

The box can be a quiet time activity
for a child. The child can make designs and
pictures by placing materials on top of the
box.

Making a Flannel Box

You will need a hosiery box, a station-
ery box, or similar box with a lid. You
will also need a piece of cotton flannel
fabric large enough to cover the lid of the
box, scissors, paste, or rubber cement.

Cut the flannel slightly larger than
the top of the box plus the sides (combined
measurement of the top and sides of the
box). Put some paste or rubber cement
around the edge of the top and on the sides
of the box. Stretch the fabric tightly over
the top and sides of the box. Make square
or mitered corners so that the fabric will
be smooth and neat. Turn the edges inside
the lid and use more paste or rubber cement
to keep them in place.

Inside the box, place an assortment of
pictures and things which will stick. Use
shapes, bits of cotton, and pieces of string
and yarn. Cut pictures of animals, cars,
and other things which interest children
from magazines. Paste a piece of cotton
flannel or sand paper to the back of the
pictures so they will stick to the flannel.

Using the Flannel Box

Give your flannel box to a fun-friend.
Show the things in the box and how they can
stick on the flannel. Let your friend play
with the box as you watch. Talk about the
pictures or designs being made. Or play
with it silently. Remember that the fun of
using the materials and the box is more
important to the child than making a beauti-
ful design or picture. Also, talking with
your friend is important.

If your friend needs help in getting
started playing with the box, you might use
the pictures to help re-tell a story, or
part of a story you have read together. Or,
you might make a design. Talk about the
shapes and colors you are using as you are
making it.

Explain to your fun-friend that the box
is to keep. Suggest to your fun-friend's
parent that it can be a useful quiet acti-
vity. It could be kept handy to take in the
car or someplace where your friend may need
to sit quietly for a long time.

Hand Puppets

Hand puppets can be used for pretend or make-believe activities. These activities are called dramatic play. In dramatic play children try out the everyday activities they see around them. This kind of play helps little children learn how it feels to be somebody else. Sometimes it helps children to show how they themselves feel inside. This is one way we learn to understand ourselves and other people.

Making a Hand Puppet

These puppets are simple to make. They are not meant to last a lifetime, but rather to furnish much fun for a short time. You may want to make more than one so that you and your fun-friend will each have one.

Puppets can be made from many inexpensive materials such as paper bags, a potato, an apple, or a rubber ball. You may also need materials and tools such as pieces of cloth, yarn, scissors, knife, paste, colored paper, crayons, tooth picks, and paints.

Paper bag puppet. Select a medium-sized paper bag with a flat bottom, such as a grocery bag. Open the paper bag fully to plan for placement of the features. Then close the bag and sketch in the face with a pencil. Don't draw the eyes too high or your character will have no forehead. Remember to allow space for hair. Place the mouth about half way down the bag, allowing enough space at the bottom to tie the bag on the wrist.

Make the features large enough to be seen from a distance. When you are satisfied with the face you have sketched on your puppets, they may be colored with crayons or paints. Another way to make features is to cut them out of colored paper and paste them on. A nose and ears that stick out from the face will help give a three-dimensional effect.

For hair, you can use colored yarn, raveled rope, wood shavings, or paper cut in quarter-inch strips and curled by pulling between your thumb and the edge of a pair of scissors. For fluttering eyelashes, you can fringe a piece of stiff paper and bend the fringes so that they stand away from the eyes.

If you wish, add a hat, a tie, or anything that will make it look more real or more funny.

Fruit or vegetable puppet. You can use an apple, potato, carrot, cucumber, or turnip for the puppet's head. Fruits and vegetables with unusual shapes can make interesting puppets and be fun to use. Cut a hole in the bottom of the fruit or vegetable large enough to go over the end of your index finger.

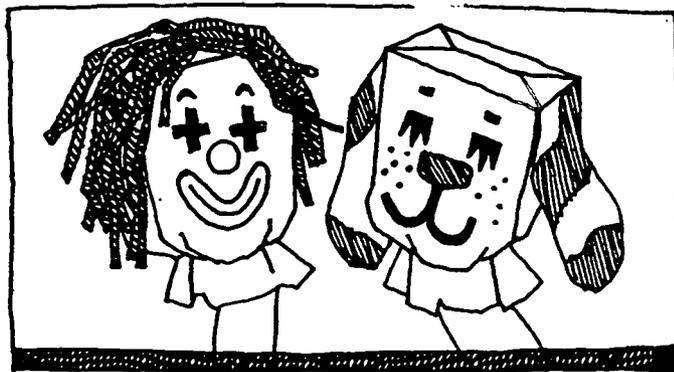
Cut out features from other fruits and vegetables and pin them on with tooth picks. Or use smaller fruits and vegetables such as raisins, grapes, green beans, and radishes. Even different kinds of greens such as turnip greens, beet greens, carrot or celery tops can make interesting features.

A square of cloth can be good cover for the hand which operates the puppet. Find the center of the cloth, place it over the index finger, and insert the cloth-covered finger into the hole in the bottom of the head you have made. Cut the cloth in two places to allow the thumb and middle finger to come through. They will serve as arms for your puppet.

Using the Hand Puppet

Children enjoy using hand puppets in much the same way they use dolls or stuffed animals. The puppets become their babies or special friends, and they include them in their make-believe play.

Older children who have seen puppet shows may want to use their puppets in a different way--to tell a story to someone else. They enjoy making up the story as they go, while playing with their puppet.



If your fun-friend wants to use the puppet in a "show," a stage will be needed. Almost anything that will hide the person working the puppet can serve as a stage. You could use a big cardboard box, a table, the back of a sofa, or a piece of cardboard placed across a doorway.

Show your fun-friend how to use the puppet. The hand puppet slips over your fingers or hand. You operate it with your fingers, hand, and arm.

Practice with the puppet in front of a mirror, using small movements. Move it so it seems alive. If there is more than one puppet on stage, those not speaking should be rather still. If too many puppets are jumping around it is hard to tell which one is talking.

If the hand puppet has been made from fruits or vegetables, it should be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator when it is not being used. Explain to your friend that it will not last for a long time. You might want to help make another one at a later time.

Acting a Story

Earlier in this project you chose a story and read it to your fun-friend. Now choose another story, read it and act out the story together. This make-believe activity is another example of dramatic play.

Selecting a Story

When you select stories to act with fun-friends, you will want to remember the kinds of stories they like. Do they prefer a story about animals, or things little children do?

A good story to act is one that is simple but has action. In other words, the people or animals in it do something. Because there are only two of you to do the acting, it would be better to choose a story with only two or three characters in it.

Acting a Story

A good way to help your fun-friend know what you mean by acting a story is to first

act a nursery rhyme. Try *Little Miss Muffet*, for instance. It is short, has only two characters, and has action.

Read *Little Miss Muffet* to the fun-friend. Suggest that you will pretend you are Miss Muffet and he or she can be the spider. Pretend you are "sitting on a tuffet" and "eating curds and whey." Your friend can pretend to be the spider who comes and frightens you away.

Now read the story you have chosen for acting to your fun-friend.

After you have read the story, suggest to your friend that you act it out like you did *Little Miss Muffet*. Talk about the characters in the story. Plan who will play which characters. Decide what things you will need (props) to help you act the story. It is better to keep props simple and to use your imagination more.

After you have acted the story, you and your fun-friend may want to act the story again with each of you trading parts or the characters you pretended to be. You and your fun-friend may also want to try acting other nursery rhymes or stories which both of you know.

Visiting Your Fun-Friend's Parent

Visit the parent of one of your fun-friends and learn about the things you have taught them. You've been having fun with your friends, but you've also been teaching them many things.

Little children learn from others. They learn by watching and by imitating. If you show something over and over, a child learns to do it.

Do you know of some things that have been learned from you? Do you teach them to say "thank you" and "please" by saying it yourself? Have you taught them to be kind to others? Have you taught them to laugh and smile instead of to whine and pout? Have you taught them to hang up their clothes and pick up the toys? Have you taught any words?

Talk to your friend's parent and learn what she or he thinks you have taught while you were with their child.

Prepared by Roberta Frasier Anderson, former Extension Family Life Specialist; reviewed and updated by Marcelle Straatman, former Extension Human Development Specialist.

The Oregon State University Extension Service educates Oregonians by delivering research-based, objective information to help them solve problems, develop leadership, and manage resources wisely.

Extension's 4-H/Youth program assists young people, their families, and adult volunteers to become productive and self-directing by developing their practical skills and knowledge. Professionals and volunteers together provide educational projects and activities in animal science, home economics, engineering, natural resources, and expressive arts.

Extension Service, Oregon State University, Corvallis, O. E. Smith, director. Produced and distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. Extension work is a cooperative program of Oregon State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Oregon counties. Oregon State University Extension Service offers educational programs, activities, and materials without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, or disability as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Oregon State University Extension Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
