

# LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND PRE-ACADEMIC BOOK ACTIVITIES GUIDE

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Welcome to the Language Development and Pre-Academic Book Activities! These activities are meant to build language and pre-academic skills in children in a fun and enjoyable way. As a former Special Education teacher, this basic structure is something we did daily in my classroom. My goal is to get a week's worth of materials to you each month.

## How to use the materials:

- On day 1, take a “picture walk” through the book. Don’t read the words; just look at the pictures with the child(ren) and comment/ask some of the questions that I have provided.
- On days 2-5, read the book to the child(ren) each day, and then complete the accompanying activity. It may even inspire ideas in you about how you can incorporate language learning in other areas of your nanny kid’s day!

The materials are divided into 3 levels. The following is a rough description of a child at each of the levels. These are not complete or strict guidelines. Use your best judgment and your knowledge of your own nanny kid when choosing a level.

### Blue Level:

A child for whom the blue level is appropriate may not say any words at all, or he or she may say a few words. This child might be able to point to an object when asked to, or maybe not. This child may or may not be able to imitate sounds that you ask them to imitate. Sign language options will be periodically available in the activities at this level; if you choose to sign with the child, make sure that you are also saying the word as you sign to encourage future vocal language. It may be difficult for this child to sit and listen to an entire book in one sitting and may need your undivided attention to do so.

### Pink Level:

The pink level is set up for the child who can say between 20-300 words and is beginning to speak in two-word utterances. In regards to pre-academics, this child is beginning to be able to sit with a sibling or friend and pay attention to the book long enough to finish it. He or she can sort items by color or shape, and is beginning to be able to identify what category something is in (e.g. point to the animal, which one is red, etc.)

### Green Level:

A child at the green level has at least a 300 spoken word vocabulary (likely you’ve stopped counting at this point!). This child may be working on things such as: speaking in complete sentences, properly using pronouns and prepositional phrases, and following 2-3 step instructions. He or she is beginning to be able to participate in back and forth conversation. Pre-academically, this child may recognize some letters and numbers, and may be able to write his or her own name. He or she is beginning to be able to count items and can categorize things at a more complex level (e.g. point to the picture of something that you eat that is red).

# Day 1 - Picture Walk

## Learning Targets

Identifying and saying/signing the words: "Boy" and "Tree", sitting and attending



## Activity

Page #s	Nanny	Child
1-2	Nanny touches the image of the boy "Boy. Touch boy"	Child touches the image of the boy
3-4	"Where is the boy?"	Child touches the image of the boy
5-6	Nanny touches the image of the boy "What is it?"	Child attempts to say or sign "boy", or nanny helps the child sign "boy"
9-10	Nanny touches the image of the tree "Tree. Touch tree"	Child touches the image of the tree
13-14	Nanny touches the image of the boy throwing "Throwing"	No response required from child
17-18	Nanny touches the image of the boy sliding "Sliding"	No response required from child
21-22	Nanny touches the image of the bath "Bath"	No response required from child
23-24	Nanny touches the image of the boy "Boy. Touch boy"	Child touches the image of the boy
25-26	Nanny touches the image of the boy) "What's this?"	Child attempts to say or sign "boy", or Nanny helps the child sign "boy"

# Day 2 - Sensory Tray

## Learning Targets

Sensory play, requesting, imitating, identifying and saying/signing the names of play items, sitting and attending

### YOU WILL NEED:

- ✓ A Tray, Baking Sheet or Cake Pan
- ✓ Instant Snow
- ✓ Water
- ✓ Small dolls/action figures, other pretend items if desired, such as small toy trees, small toy house, white pom poms for



“snowballs” etc.

## Activity

1. Create the “snow” inside the tray and gather any items that you plan to use with it but keep the items out of the child’s reach for now.
2. If the child shows interest in an item, label and sign the item for them and pause for 2-3 seconds to allow the child to repeat the word.
3. If the child DOES attempt to say or sign the word, immediately give the item and lots of praise.
4. If the child does NOT attempt say or sign the word, repeat the word and pause one more time.
5. If the child still does not attempt to say or sign the word, say and sign it one more time, and give the item to the child you may help the child sign the word at this time, if he or she will tolerate that.
6. If the child does not show interest in any item, choose one for them and do the above.
7. As you are playing with the child, model certain actions (such as having the doll “walk” through the snow or “slide” down a hill) and have the child imitate you.
8. Say “Do this” as you do the action and wait for the child to imitate. You can help the child complete the task if he or she does not readily do so on their own.
9. Continue to play in the sensory tray as long as it is still fun for both of you

# Day 3 - Snowy Day Scene

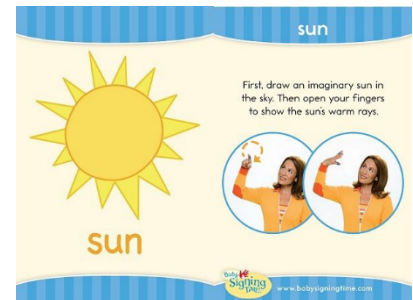
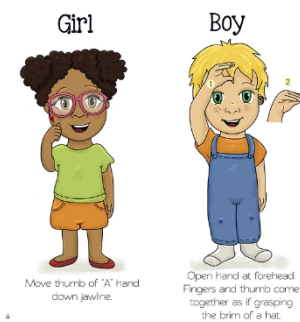
## Learning Targets

Identifying Common Objects, sitting and attending



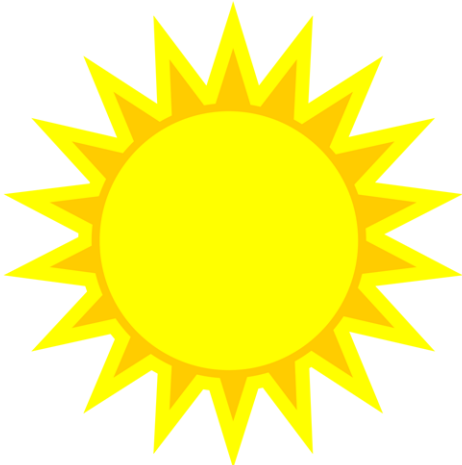
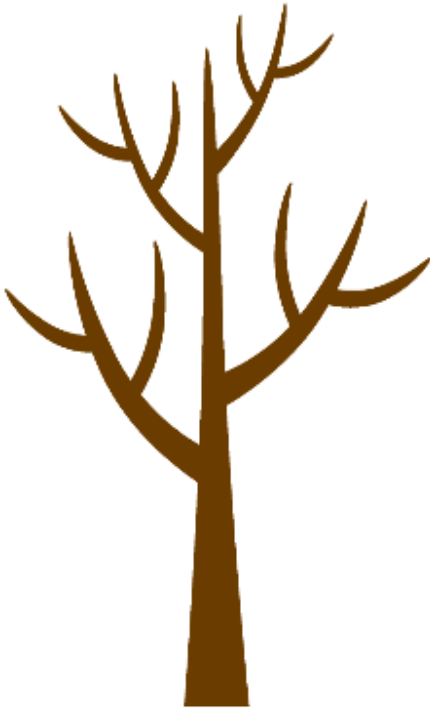
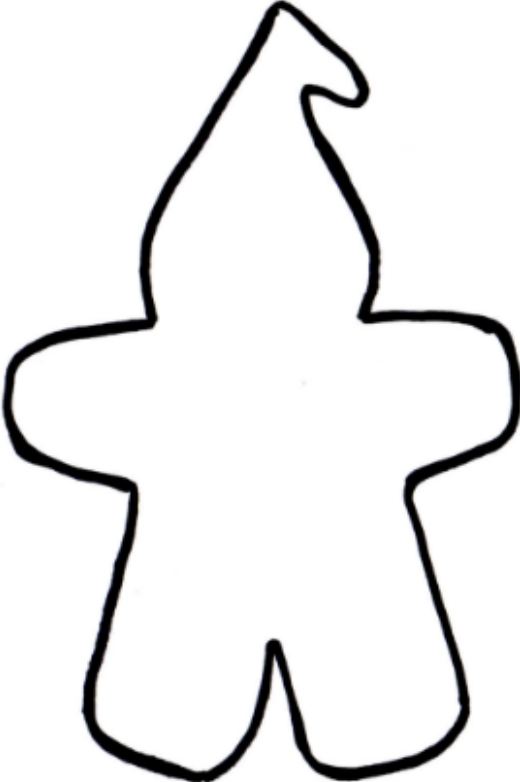
### YOU WILL NEED:

- ✓ A large blue piece of construction paper
- ✓ Red Construction Paper
- ✓ Several rectangles of various sizes & colors to represent buildings (see image above)
- ✓ Printable cut outs of: boy, snowman, tree, sun (available on the next page)
- ✓ Glue Stick
- ✓ Glue bottle
- ✓ Cotton Balls



## Activity

1. Cut out figures from the Craft Materials on the next page
2. Color the "boy" red; add a face for a front view, or all red for a back view..
3. Ask the child to get each piece as you ask for them by name in simple language (e.g. "get sun" "give me tree"). Allow the child to glue them on the paper wherever he or she pleases. If the child is struggling with this task, try first touching and naming the item, then asking for it by name.
4. Drizzle some liquid glue around and allow the child to glue on cotton balls for "snow".





# Day 4 - Playdough Snowmen

## Learning Targets

Receptive Identification of body parts; following verbal instructions, building fine motor muscles, sitting and attending



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### YOU WILL NEED:

- |                          |                                       |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ✓ 1 cup flour            | ✓ 1 cup water                         |
| ✓ ½ cup salt             | ✓ 1 tsp peppermint extract (optional) |
| ✓ 1 Tbsp cream of tartar | ✓ Iridescent glitter (optional)       |
| ✓ 1 Tbsp vegetable oil   | ✓ Popsicle Sticks                     |

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### ITEMS FOR SNOWMAN CONSTRUCTION

- |                                   |               |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| ✓ Buttons                         | ✓ Ribbon      |
| ✓ Pipe cleaners in various colors | ✓ Felt        |
| ✓ Sticks                          | ✓ Googly eyes |
| ✓ Pieces of carrot                |               |

## Activity

1. Make the playdough first by mixing the first 5 items and cooking on medium-low heat and stir constantly until mixture forms a ball. Allow to cool and add peppermint extract and/or glitter as desired.
2. Divide playdough in half. Make your own example snowman for show.
3. With the other half, roll 3 balls for the snowman's body and assemble onto the popsicle stick (you can ask the child to "put on" the balls and help them if they are ready for that)
4. Create the snowman with the child. Pick up items yourself (e.g. a googly eye)" as you say the name of the items 2-3 times with a brief pause between each time to see if he or she will repeat you. If they do attempt the word, give the item immediately with praise! If they don't attempt to repeat the word after the 3rd time, give the child the item and tell them to "put on" and point to where the item goes.
5. Once the snowman is complete, you can ask the child to touch specific snowman "body parts" (e.g. "touch eye") if they are not ready to do this independently, you can point to the item as you are telling them to touch the item. Continue with various body parts if the activity is fun for both of you.
6. Deconstruct your example snowman and allow the child to play with the playdough & remaining items as he or she wishes now, or later.

# Day 5 - Snowman Pizzas

## Learning Targets

Fine motor, requesting/labeling, following simple directions

### YOU WILL NEED:

- ✓ Pillsbury or other readymade pizza dough
- ✓  $\frac{3}{4}$  c alfredo sauce
- ✓ 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  c shredded mozzarella cheese
- ✓ Sliced black olives
- ✓ Pepperoni cut into strips as seen above - some large and some small
- ✓ Orange bell pepper, cut into triangle shaped pieces - some big & some small
- ✓ Yellow bell pepper, cut into triangle shaped pieces - some big & some small



## Activity

1. Preheat oven to 400 F
2. Divide the dough into factors of 3. Press into circles and make as many snowmen as your dough will allow.
3. Spread alfredo sauce on each circle of dough
4. Make one example snowman before you bring the child over
5. Keep all items except the dough out of the child's reach, but in sight
6. Pick up and show the child the cheese and say "cheese" 2-3 times, pausing for a couple seconds each time to see if the child will repeat you. If he or she does, praise and give them the cheese. If they do not repeat you, give them the cheese anyway on the third time you say it. Help the child sprinkle the cheese onto the snowman.
7. Put one olive "button" on the snowman while saying "do this" and wait for the child to copy you (or help them do it)
8. As you put on the facial features, label them "eyes" "nose" and "mouth" then ask the child to touch those facial features - help them if needed
9. Continue as long as it is fun for both of you, and then bake for 9-13 min, let cool, then eat & enjoy!

## Day 1 - Picture Walk

### Learning Targets

Labeling nouns, verbs, combining noun & verb in 2+ word utterances, labeling by categories, sitting and attending



### Activity

Page #s	Nanny	Child
1-2	"What is the boy doing?"	Child "sitting" or "looking"
3-4	(Nanny points to snow) "What is it?"	Child "snow")
5-6	"Something that is cold is..."	Child says "snow" or points to snow or anything else that is cold
11-12	"Something you wear on your head is..."	Child says "a hat" or points to the hat
13-14	"What do you see?"	Child says "boys throwing" or "boy sitting" or any other similarly correct answer
17-18	(Nanny points to the image of the boy sliding) "What is he doing?"	Child says "sliding"
21-22	Either "A duck says..." Or Which one says "quack?" OR "What's he doing?"	Child says "quack" Or Child says "duck" or points to duck OR Child says "taking a bath"
23-24	(Nanny points to the image of the boy in bed) "What do you see here?"	Child says "boy sleeping" or "He's sleeping" or "Boy in bed" etc

## Day 2 - Sensory Tray

### Learning Targets

Sensory play, requesting, imitating, following verbal instructions, sitting and attending

YOU WILL NEED:



- ✓ A Tray, Baking Sheet or Cake Pan
- ✓ Instant Snow
- ✓ Water
- ✓ Small dolls/action figures, other pretend items if desired, such as small toy trees, small toy house, white pom poms for “snowballs” etc.

## Activity

1. Sprinkle the dry instant snow onto the bottom of the tray, and gather the items you plan to use, including a container with water in it
2. Ask the child to pour water into the tray. (only point to the cup and/or tray if the child does not seem to understand your verbal instructions)
3. Have fun with the child mixing and watching the snow grow.
4. Begin playing with an item in the “snow” and wait to see if the child requests any items on his or her own.
5. If the child does not request on his or her own, you can ask ‘Which one would you like?’
6. Play around with items, and occasionally ask the child to do what you do “Do this” and model an action with one of the items (example: say “Do this” and walk the doll in the snow or slide it down a hill. Put the doll down and wait for the child to imitate.)
7. Continue to play in the sensory tray if it is still fun :)

# Day 3 - Snowy Day Scene

## Learning Targets

Requesting using 2 or more words, request missing items, sitting and attending

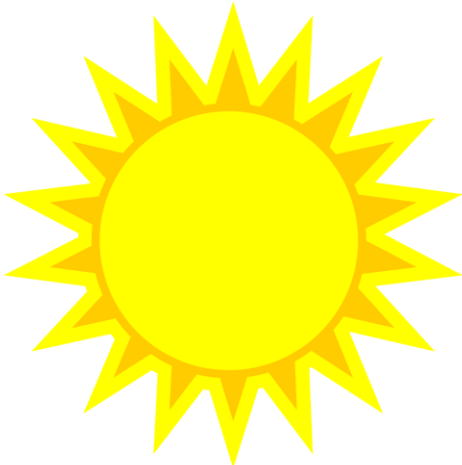
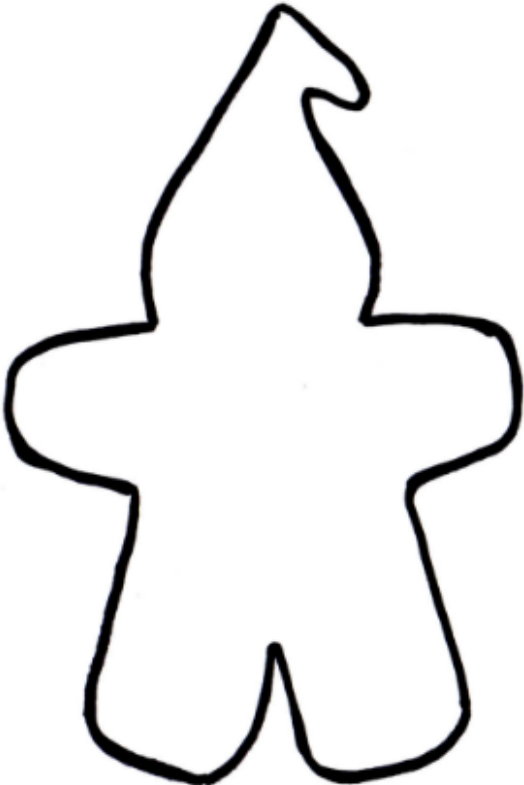
**YOU WILL NEED:**



- ✓ A large blue piece of construction paper
- ✓ Red Construction Paper
- ✓ Several rectangles of various sizes & colors to represent buildings (see image above)
- ✓ Printable cut outs of: boy, snowman, tree, sun (available on the next page)
- ✓ Glue Stick
- ✓ Glue bottle
- ✓ Cotton Balls

## Activity

1. If possible, gather enough materials so that you AND the child can create one of these scenes. Have all the materials out of the child's reach except for the blue construction paper.
2. "Accidentally forget" to provide a glue stick for the child.
3. Tell the child that you both are going to recreate a scene from the book and proceed to work on your scene.
4. Wait for the child to request the items that he or she wants.
5. if they don't request, go ahead and ask them which piece they want. (ideally, when it comes to the rectangles, they would request with the color + shape, give them the space to do this and prompt them if they don't - i.e. if they point, ask them to tell you; if they say rectangle ask which color etc.)
6. Provide the requested item but wait for the child to request the missing glue stick without mentioning it.
7. If they don't request glue, you can ask them what they need, and/or tell them to glue the piece in a certain place on the paper as hints.
8. As they finish, drizzle some glue and allow the child to glue on cotton balls for "snow"



# Day 4 - Playdough Snowmen

## Learning Targets

Requesting, following verbal instructions, identifying items by category, building fine motor muscles, sitting and attending



### YOU WILL NEED:

- ✓ 1 cup flour
- ✓ ½ cup salt
- ✓ 1 Tbsp cream of tartar
- ✓ 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- ✓ 1 cup water
- ✓ 1 tsp peppermint extract (optional)
- ✓ Iridescent glitter (optional)
- ✓ Popsicle Sticks

### ITEMS FOR SNOWMAN CONSTRUCTION

- ✓ Buttons
- ✓ Pipe cleaners in various colors
- ✓ Sticks
- ✓ Pieces of carrot
- ✓ Ribbon
- ✓ Felt
- ✓ Googly eyes

## Activity

1. Make the playdough first by mixing the first 5 items and cooking on medium-low heat and stir constantly until mixture forms a ball. Allow to cool and add peppermint extract and/or glitter as desired.
2. Divide playdough in half. Make your own example snowman for show.
3. Place all other items out of the child's reach, but in sight.
4. With the other half, IF the child is willing and able, ask them to help you roll out 3 balls. Otherwise, roll them out ahead of time and have them ready for the activity.
5. Ask the child to put the balls on the stick (you may need to do the first one as an example)
6. Show the child 3-4 items (e.g. googly eye, a red button, a blue button, a stick) ask the child what he or she would like to use for eyes. Give the child what he or she asked for. (if needed, you can point to each item and label them).
7. Ask the child to put the item on if they haven't already. (if needed, you can point to where it should go)
8. Continue until the snowman is built.
9. Ask the child questions regarding category - i.e. "Which one does the snowman see with?" "What can he smell with?" "What keeps him warm?" etc. Continue if the activity is fun for both of you
10. Deconstruct your own snowman and allow the child to play with playdough and items as he or she wishes, now or later.
11. If your child knows the song "Frosty the Snowman" you can sing it, pausing in places to see if the child will fill in the words (i.e. "Frosty, the snow...."). If he or she does not know the song, go ahead and sing it a couple of times today and try the fill in part tomorrow.

# Day 5 - Snowman Pizzas

## Learning Targets

Fine motor, 2-word requests (adjective + noun), song fill ins (pre-conversational turn taking)

### YOU WILL NEED:

- ✓ Pillsbury or other readymade pizza dough
- ✓  $\frac{3}{4}$  c alfredo sauce
- ✓ 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  c shredded mozzarella cheese
- ✓ Sliced black olives
- ✓ Pepperoni cut into strips as seen above - some large and some small
- ✓ Orange bell pepper, cut into triangle shaped pieces - some big & some small



## Activity

1. Preheat oven to 400 F
2. Divide the dough into factors of 3. Press into circles and make as many snowmen as your dough will allow.
3. Spread alfredo sauce on each circle of dough
4. Make one example snowman before you bring the child over
5. Keep all items except the dough out of the child's reach, but in sight
6. Verbally label following items for the child (cheese, olives, pepperoni, & pepper)
7. Ask the child what he or she would like to put on their snowman. If they only request with one word (e.g. pepper) try to get them to use two words by asking them "which one?" (they can respond "big pepper" or "yellow pepper" etc)
8. Continue until the snowmen are complete.
9. During the activity, sing "Frosty the Snowman" leaving pauses for the child to fill in the words (e.g. "Frost, the snow....")
10. Bake pizzas for 9-13 minutes, let cool, then eat & enjoy!



## Day 1 - Picture Walk

### Learning Targets

Labeling prepositional phrases, colors, categories of items, identifying verb + noun, sitting and attending

### Activity



Page #s	Nanny	Child
1-2	Where is the boy sitting?	Child "ON the bed" or "IN the bed"
	What is happening in this picture?	Child responds with a complete sentence
9-10	Which boy is poking the tree?	Child points to the correct image
11-12	What color is his hat?	Child "red"
13-14	What is something that you can do with a snowball?	Child "throw it" or any other appropriate response
	How many boys do you see?	Child "four"
17-18	Which boy is at the top of the hill?	
21-22	Something that goes in the water is a... Yes, and what else goes in the water?	Child "duck" or "boat" or "boy" or some other appropriate response Child "duck," "boat," "boy," or some other appropriate response

# Day 2 - Sensory Tray

## Learning Targets

Using complete sentences, Prepositional Phrases, Adjectives, following two step instructions, sitting and attending

### YOU WILL NEED:

- ✓ A Tray, Baking Sheet or Cake Pan
- ✓ Instant Snow
- ✓ Water
- ✓ Small dolls/action figures, other pretend items if desired, such as small toy trees, small toy house, white pom poms for



“snowballs” etc.

## Activity

1. Sprinkle the dry instant snow onto the bottom of the tray, and gather the items you plan to use, including an empty container for water and a sheet of paper
2. Feel the dry granules with the child and ask the child what it feels like (any appropriate answer is fine)
3. Ask the child to “fill the cup with water, and then pour it into the tray”. (the goal is that the child follows a 2-step instruction, so try to allow him or her to do this as independently as possible - within reason, they may need assistance reaching the sink for example, but let them lead)
4. Ask them “Now how does it feel?” (again, any appropriate answer here is fine)
5. Have fun with the child mixing and watching the snow grow.
6. Pretend play with the child in the sensory bin, recreating scenes from the book and/or making your own.
7. As you are playing halfway cover up one of the items with the sheet of paper, so that it is still partially visible. Try to have it out of reach of the child but visible to him or her. Pretend that you are looking for the item and ask the child where the item is. The goal is that the child uses the prepositional phrase “under” even better if he or she does it in a complete sentence such as “It’s under the paper!”
8. Continue to play in the sensory tray as long as it is still fun

## Day 3 - Snowy Day Scene

One the third day, read the book and then complete the following activity at your child's level.

### Learning Targets

Prepositional Phrases, Phonemic awareness, Requesting Information, Sitting and Attending

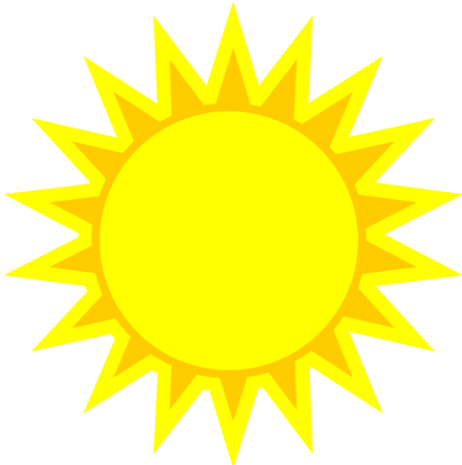
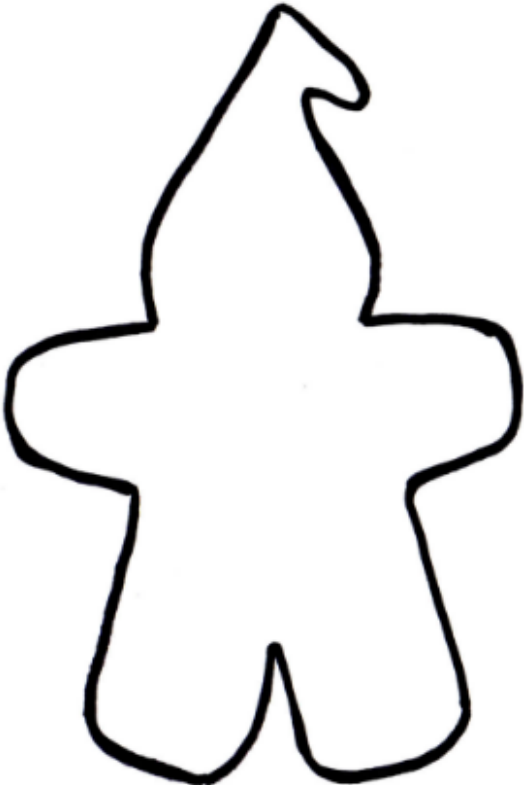


#### YOU WILL NEED:

- ✓ A large blue piece of construction paper
- ✓ Red Construction Paper
- ✓ Several rectangles of various sizes & colors to represent buildings (see image above)
- ✓ Printable cut outs of: boy, snowman, tree, sun (available on the next page)
- ✓ Glue Stick
- ✓ Glue bottle
- ✓ Cotton Balls

### Activity

1. If possible, gather enough materials so that you AND the child can create one of these scenes. Have all the materials out of the child's reach except for the blue construction paper.
2. Hide the cotton balls
3. Ask the child to glue the (whatever color or size you choose) rectangle in the middle of the paper.
4. Ask the child to glue the (whatever color or size you choose) rectangle *next to* the first one. (i.e. glue the blue rectangle next to the big rectangle)
5. Ask the child to glue the snowman *between* the X rectangle and the X rectangle
6. Ask the child which one starts with the /t/ sound. Tell them to glue it wherever he or she wants
7. Ask the child to glue the one that starts with the /s/ sound to the top of the paper
8. Let them request any other items that they would like and glue them on.
9. When they are finished with that, tell them that you have one more fun thing to do with this project. Wait for them to ask, "what is it?" or some such question.
10. If they don't ask, go ahead and repeat yourself, but add a prompt "I have one more fun thing to add to the paper - do you want to know what it is?"
11. Tell, and show them the cotton balls for snow.
12. Drizzle liquid glue onto the paper and allow the child to place the cotton balls all over



## Day 4 - Playdough Snowmen

On the fourth day, read the book and then complete the following activity.

### Learning Targets

Learning Targets: Requesting information, answering questions involving categories and prepositional phrases, counting to 3, building fine motor muscles, sitting and attending



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#### YOU WILL NEED:

- ✓ 1 cup flour
- ✓ ½ cup salt
- ✓ 1 Tbsp cream of tartar
- ✓ 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- ✓ 1 cup water
- ✓ 1 tsp peppermint extract (optional)
- ✓ Iridescent glitter (optional)
- ✓ Popsicle Sticks

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#### ITEMS FOR SNOWMAN CONSTRUCTION

- ✓ Buttons
- ✓ Pipe cleaners in various colors
- ✓ Sticks
- ✓ Pieces of carrot
- ✓ Ribbon
- ✓ Felt
- ✓ Googly eyes

### Activity

1. Make the playdough first by mixing the first 5 items and cooking on medium-low heat and stir constantly until mixture forms a ball. Allow to cool and add peppermint extract and/or glitter as desired.
2. Divide playdough in half. Make your own example snowman for show. Hide your snowman within your reach. (i.e. behind your back or under a hand towel, etc.)
3. Place all other items out of the child's reach, but in sight.
4. Tell the child you have something fun to show them & wait for them to ask, "What is it?" or something of the sort; then show the child your snowman and ask them to make one with you.
5. Ask the child to roll out 3 balls for the snowman. Help as necessary but allow the child to roll and count as independently as possible.
6. Show the child how you stuck your 3 snowballs together with a stick. Wait for the child to imitate yours. Help as needed.
7. Prompt the child to grab items as you describe the category "Hmmm, what can the snowman see with?" What is something he can wear?" etc. and allow the child to tell you before you hand over the item. \*\*You can also ask things like "Where does this one go?" with the goal that the child will use prepositional phrases (i.e. "under his chin" "On top of his head" etc.) Continue if it is fun for both of you.
8. Deconstruct your own snowman and allow the child to play with playdough and items as he or she wishes, now or later.

## Day 5 - Snowman Pizzas

On the fifth day, read the book and then complete the following activity.

### Learning Targets

Fine motor, giving verbal instructions using adjectives, prepositional phrases, and actions

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#### YOU WILL NEED:

- ✓ Pillsbury or other readymade pizza dough
- ✓  $\frac{3}{4}$  c alfredo sauce
- ✓ 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  c shredded mozzarella cheese
- ✓ Sliced black olives
- ✓ Pepperoni cut into strips as seen above - some large and some small
- ✓ Orange bell pepper, cut into triangle shaped pieces - some big & some small
- ✓ Yellow bell pepper, cut into triangle shaped pieces - some big & some small



### Activity

1. Preheat oven to 400 F
2. Divide the dough into factors of 3. Press into circles and make as many snowmen as your dough will allow.
3. Spread alfredo sauce on each circle of dough
4. Make one example snowman before you bring the child over
5. Keep all items except the dough out of the child's reach but in sight
6. Verbally label following items for the child (cheese, olives, pepperoni, & pepper)
7. Tell the child you need help making these snowmen. Ask him or her what you should do first. As he or she gives the instructions, you make one and give him or her the items so that they can make one as well.
8. If they are not specific in their instructions (e.g. they say put pepper on) ask for "where" and "what kind" questions so that the child needs to use adjectives (big orange pepper or little yellow pepper etc.) and/or prepositional phrases (under the snowman's eyes or above the pepperoni, etc)
9. Continue this way with the child giving you the instructions until the snowmen are completed, then ask the child "Now what should we do?" If they don't say to cook it, you can add phrases like "hmmm.... it's cold, but I want it hot...what should I do?"
10. Bake for 9-13 min, let cool, eat and enjoy!