



BLAST OFF TO OUTER SPACE

What is a Small World?

A "small world" is a tiny playset where kids can use their imagination to create stories and adventures with miniature figures and objects. It's a fun, interactive way to explore different settings and topics through pretend play.

Tip! Add photos of real settings, or items that relate to your small world setup. Introduce new vocabulary by including words with pictures to your small world.



How to Set up a Small World at Home

Choose a spot: Pick a location in your home like a table or corner.

Select a theme: Decide what world you would like to create like a miniature farm or dinosaur world. This should be based on what the children are interested in or are learning about.

Get supplies: Choose toys, sensory items, loose parts, and fabrics that relate to your theme.

Create the scene: Arrange the toys and objects to create the desired setting. Adding real photos or books can really extend the learning.

Safety: Ensure the items are age appropriate to avoid choking hazards, and supervise playtime.

Encourage Play: Allow the children to use their imagination and have fun in their small world! Ask open ended questions to extend learning.



Loose Parts Safety

Loose Part play encourages creativity problem solving, and imagination. Before introducing loose parts here are some safety tips:

- **Supervision:** Always supervise young children during loose part play to prevent accidents.
- **Age-appropriate materials:** Choose objects that match your child's age and developmental stage.
- **Check Loose Parts:** Regularly check loose parts for any wear and tear, replace as needed.
- **Clean Materials:** Make sure the materials are clean and free from any harmful substances.



How To Use Loose Parts In a Small World

Loose parts are open ended materials like shells, blocks, fabric, beads, sticks, or stones that children can play with any way they choose. You can use loose parts to build, create art, or invent games. The key is to allow for unstructured play and exploration of the materials, allowing the children to explore their ideas without specific instructions. You can incorporate loose parts into a provocation as seen in the picture to the left.



*This is an Arctic small world. Gems, rocks, and other materials were added to spark an icy feel. *Make sure items are age appropriate for the children in your care.*

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Galaxy Sensory Bottles?

Create calming and engaging sensory bottles to your outer space play.

Materials:

- Clear plastic bottles with lid
- water
- Glitter
- Oil
- Food colouring
- Star shaped glitter, or foam shapes

Fill your bottle 3 quarters of the way up with water, then add your food colouring and glitter to the bottle. Fill the bottle the rest of the way up with your oil. Secure the cap by hot gluing it to the top of your bottle or by using duck tape. Give it a shake, and its ready to go!

TIPS:

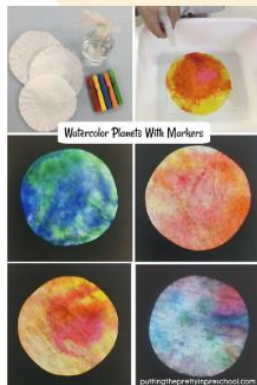
you can replace the oil with clear glue, corn syrup, or glycerine to change the effect of the sensory bottle.



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Gross Motor Play!

During these winter months, there is bound to be a day where outside play has to be put on hold. Engaging in indoor gross motor play with activities like “the floor is lava” using cushions, or creating an obstacle course will help with energy levels, as well as promote physical milestone skill development.

Ideas for Indoor Gross Motor Play

Megablock Jumping: Use Megablocks to build hurdles for the children to jump over.

Paper Plate Skating: using paper plates, tissue boxes, or wax paper, children can pretend to skate.

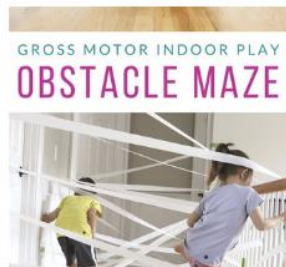
Balloon Play: Bouncing balloons are a great way for children to engage in gross motor play. You can also add fly swatters or pool noodles for hitting the balloons.

Dance Party: Having a dance party is a fun way to use up some of that energy!

Indoor Snowball Toss: Using fake snowballs (balled-up socks!) children can practice aiming at targets. Try underhand and overhand throws.



www.andnextcomesl.com



www.whatmomslove.com



www.hesextraordinary.com



www.morningchores.com



www.happytoddlerplaytime.com

5 Activities With 6 Lines of Painters Tape!

- How Far Can You Stretch with your legs?
- Hop From Each Line
- Measure Yourself
- Walk backwards
- How Far Can You Reach?



www.handsonaswegrow.com

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MUSIC AND MOVEMENT



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Children naturally love music! Whether it's soft and soothing or a lively tune, children feel it both physically and emotionally.

Throughout the early years, children are learning to do new things with their bodies. Young children are also learning that movement can communicate messages and represent actions. Singing or chanting can help make routine activities and transitions, such as gathering children into a circle or group activity, smoother and more enjoyable. And, music helps to set a mood. Quiet, soothing music calms and relaxes children, while a lively marching tune rouses them for energetic clean-up time. Music and movement are also social activities that help children feel part of the group.

What do children learn when you add music and movement to your day?

- Auditory Perception and Discrimination (distinguishing between sounds)
- Rhythm
- Counting and other concepts (with numbers and rhymes)
- Rhyming and Syllables
- Vocabulary and Language Skills
- Memory Recall



Simple ways to add more music and movement into your day!

- **Transition songs**- As you move through your day have songs that match your change in routine.
- **Storybooks you can sing**- Seeing the pictures can be a great way for kids to engage with the music.
- **Spontaneous body breaks**- Have spontaneous moments in your day for children to just move, or put on a song and dance!
- **Lines of tape**- Place lines of tape on your floor and have the children stretch, jump, crawl, slide, and hop to each line.
- **Balloon Games**- Don't let the balloon touch the floor.
- Try **Yoga** with your group of children.
- **Make and use a drum**- Grab an empty coffee can, and old pot, or empty box and personalize your drum with stickers and the like.

Naptime Transition Song

Hop a little, jump a little
One, two, three;
Run a little, skip a little
Tap on knee;
Bend a little, stretch a little,
Nod your head;
Yawn a little, sleep a little,
In your bed.

Wiggle Your Fingers, Stomp Your Feet! (Chant)

Wiggle your fingers in the air.
Wiggle them, wiggle them everywhere!
Stomp your feet upon the ground.
Stomp them, stomp them all around.

Now sit down and cross your feet.
Hands in lap, nice and neat.
Now we are ready to start our day.
We'll listen first, and then we'll play!



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Child Care Providers
RESOURCE NETWORK

A WHEELING ADVENTURE



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You can squeeze a ton of learning into a transportation theme. Children see construction trucks working, helicopters hovering, and ambulances zooming by in their daily lives so bringing that into your program allows children to make the connection to their everyday world. This topic opens the door for many conversations with your children. Questions such as "What kinds of transportation do I use?" or "How do we stay safe when using transportation?" Here are a few group or circle time ideas that you can use.



Where is Red Light?

Tune: Where is Thumbkin?

Where is red light? Where is red light?

Here I am. Here I am.

Tell us what you say, sir. Tell us what you say, sir.

I say stop! I say stop!

Where is yellow light? Where is yellow light?

Here I am. Here I am.

Tell us what you say, sir. Tell us what you say, sir.

I say wait. I say wait.

Where is green light? Where is green light?

Here I am. Here I am.

Tell us what you say, sir. Tell us what you say, sir.

I say go. I say go.

Red says stop, yellow says wait,

Green says go, green says go.

These are traffic signals, these are traffic signals,

That we know, that we know.

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Action Songs

Action songs and games are a great way to improve children's physical movement and muscle coordination, while having fun together.

Action songs require children to listen, follow direction and model what you are doing. So use this as a body break not only for the children, have some fun along with them.

Print off these free exercise cards for a simple but fun action game that will get everyone moving.

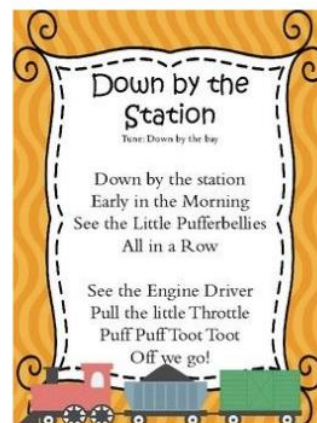
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The file includes cards with these exercises and more:

- sail like a boat
- stretch up like a balloon
- zoom like a jet
- fly like a plane
- dive like a submarine
- ride like a bicycle
- crash like a monster truck
- back up like a delivery truck
- float like a blimp
- speed up like a scooter



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COMMUNITY HELPERS

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Teaching Children About Community Helpers

It's vital to introduce the concept of community helpers to help children recognize and trust the people who are charged to serve and protect, like firefighters, doctors and nurses, and the police. There are so many fun activities you can bring into your program to spark children's interest as well as give them this knowledge.



Activities



Put the fire out activity

Laminate some flame shapes and use shaving cream to trace the flames. Give the children spray bottles of water and encourage them to wash away all the flames. This is also a great activity outdoors on pavement with chalk. <https://turnertots.com>

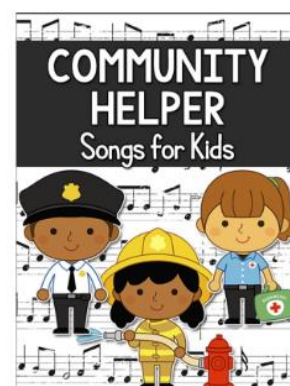


Design your own community

This is a great collaborative art activity. You can assist the children and draw the roads then allow the children to stamp different shapes to make buildings and houses. <https://teachpreschool.org>



Circle Time Songs



This is a great website that is full of songs that will get your little ones up and moving. www.prekinders.com



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