

Learning possibilities for location and direction

Children learn about location and direction from everyday experiences, first by experimenting with ways to move their bodies, to navigate furniture and avoid falls. As they develop physical knowledge of being in a space children begin to see relationships between people and other objects or events. For example, a child may begin to make judgments, such as whether a toy car will fit into a small box or whether they need a larger box.

As your child/children learn about location and direction it's important to introduce spatial language including:

- **Position:** over, under, above, below, top, bottom, side, on, in, between, outside, inside, around, in front, behind, front, back, before, after, beside, next to, opposite, apart, middle, edge, corner.
- **Direction:** left, right, up, down, forwards, backwards, sideways, across, along, through, close, far, near, to, from, towards, away from.
- **Comparison:** wide, wider, widest, loud, louder, loudest, quiet, quieter, quietest, empty, full, half full, same, overflowing.
- **Movement:** slide, roll, stretch, bend.

Play ideas to try

- Play a game of follow the leader. Demonstrate how to play by being the leader first. Invite your child/children to stand behind you in a line. Make actions as you walk around and encourage your child/children to copy them. Use words to describe your actions, for example 'Ready march! Left, right, left right... Now wave your arms above your head... Now walking on tip toes very quietly... that's it! Let's jump with two feet together!' When your child/children are confident, invite them to take turns at being the leader. Encourage them to describe their actions aloud as they play.
- Make a batch of slime using the recipe in the resource box (this is a non-toxic/edible recipe). Invite your child/children to participate in the measuring and mixing and talk about the changes that happen when the ingredients are mixed and cooked. Once the slime is cool, invite your child/children to explore and investigate ways to play with it – stretching, squeezing, popping, throwing and catching; or as a medium for imaginative play with small plastic animals/figures/plants or cooking utensils. Talk with your child/children about the sensory experience, encouraging them to think of words to describe the slime (blobby, sticky, gloopy) and its movement (stretching, bouncing, flopping).
- Encourage your child/children to help with some simple household chores. Support them by using the language of position, direction and movement. For example:

Resources

'Teddy bear, teddy bear' (action song)

Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around;
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground;
Teddy bear, teddy bear, jump up high;
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the sky!
Teddy bear, teddy bear, bend down low;
Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch your toes;
Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn out the light;
Teddy bear, teddy bear, say good night!

Video

We're going on a bear hunt

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Waoa3iG3bZ4>

Songs

We're going on a bear hunt

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2W1Z332vWc>

Teddy bear twist

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBmCy4AbqCs>

Rock-a-bye your bear

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOUNwyumiUQ>

Teddy bear, teddy bear

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76wc4xdgzGk>

Teddy bear's picnic

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1lr_EvPamWw

Recipe

Slime

<https://www.taste.com.au/recipes/edible-slime/avdbycij>

- Sweeping the floor – under the couch, between the chairs, backwards and forwards, side to side
- Washing dishes – under the water, wash the inside, drain upside down, pull out the plug
- Cleaning the windows/mirror – rub around in a circle, wipe across and down, all around the edge
- Making the bed – tuck the sheet under, pull the doona up and over, teddies on top.

Text: Rosen, M. 2016 *We're going on a bear hunt*, Walker books, London

Engage

Step 1. If you have this book at home, encourage your child/children to predict what the story is about from the cover. If not use the suggested video link in the resources box and watch the video together.

Step 2. Read/watch the story.

Step 3. Here are some questions to ask your child/children about the story.

1. Who went on the bear hunt? (any of the following – mummy, daddy, brother, sister, baby, dog)
2. What did they have to go through? (any of the following – grass, river, mud, forest, snow storm, cave)
3. How do you think it felt to go through the mud?
4. Do you think they really went on a bear hunt or were imagining it? Tell me why.

Play ideas to try

- Go on a bear hunt in your home or garden. Invite your child/children and any other family members to join in. Support your child/children to sing along with the repeated phrases from the story/song (see the links in the resource box). Encourage them to innovate by choosing new obstacles from your home or garden to go through and ways to describe it. For example, a sandpit, 'Uh-oh a desert! A big hot desert! We can't go over it... We have to go through it! Jump, hop, jump, hop, jump, hop.'
- Create a map of a bear hunt. Together with your child/children, recall the places the characters went on their bear hunt. Look through the book to help support recall. Talk with your child/children about maps and how they help us find our way, and look at some examples (road map, pictorial map, atlas, navigation app or website) to see the different ways this can be represented. Provide drawing or painting materials and invite your child/children to create a map of the bear hunt (or another kind of map if they choose). Encourage them to describe the places they have represented on their map by asking open-ended questions, for example, 'Yes, I can see that's the river. Where did you go next?'
- Invite the whole family to bring their favourite teddy bear to a Teddy bear's disco! Turn the music up and join in the teddy bear action songs (see the resource box) or any other family favourite tunes. Encourage your child/children to listen to the words and do the moves, or make up their own moves and teach the rest of the family.
- Make a bear's cave using a large cardboard box or a sheet draped between two dining chairs. Your child/children can pretend to be the bear in the cave and decide whether they are going to be a growly scary bear or a teddy in their dramatic game play.
- Create a small world play scene for the story using playdough and collage materials to help your child/children retell the story.