

# WEE Learn

## Curriculum Guide for Three-Year-Olds



**WINTER**




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**LifeWay**  
Biblical Solutions for Life

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## **Curriculum Guide for Three-Year-Olds, Revised**

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without any mixture of error, for its matter;  
and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy.

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## Unit Eight **OVERVIEW**

# I Have Favorite Toys

### **Purpose**

To give children opportunities to use and talk about their favorite toys and to help them become aware of the kinds of toys Jesus might have played with when He was a child.

### **Guidance for Planning**

- Gather several of your childhood toys and bring them to school. If you do not have samples, try to remember some of your favorite toys.
- Invite parents and grandparents to visit and bring their childhood toys to show.
- Invite someone who makes handmade toys to visit.
- Invite a person who makes rag dolls or refurbishes old dolls to visit and show her dolls.
- Locate a picture-story version of the folktale "Pinocchio."
- Gather picture books about a dog named Carl and his family by Alexandra Day.
- Gather books about teddy bears by Don Freeman.

### **Bible Story**

When Jesus Was a Child (Luke 2:39-40  
and archaeological research)



# Learning Centers

## Art Center



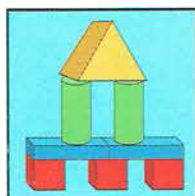
Making Toys  
Painting with Toys  
Making Wind Toys  
Pasting Pictures of Toys  
Using Clay  
Making a Paper-Bag Puppet

## Music Center



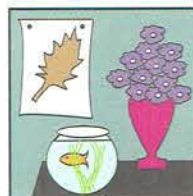
Making Handmade Instruments  
Using Rhythm Instruments  
Pretending to Be Toys

## Block Center



Enjoying Unit Blocks  
Playing Toy Store  
Playing with Vehicles  
Using Paper Towel Tubes  
Building a House for a Toy

## Nature and Science Center



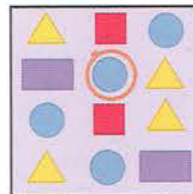
Using Bathtub Toys  
Weighing Toys  
Lining Up Toys  
Observing Windup Toys  
Experimenting with Spinning Tops

## Book and Listening Center



Listening to Books About Toys  
Telling a Story with a Puppet  
Looking at Toy Catalogs  
Enjoying Wordless Picture Books  
Making a Book of Favorite Toys  
Reading About Toy Bears  
Learning Important Concepts

## Puzzles and Manipulatives Center



Working Puzzles  
Using Rainbow Blocks  
Sorting Caps and Lids  
Building Toys with Bolt 'N Play  
Using Tinkertoy Manipulatives  
Sorting Toys

## Homeliving Center



Shopping for Toys  
Playing with Handmade Toys  
Having a Tea Party  
Playing Checkers  
Looking at Catalogs  
Wrapping Toys for Gifts  
Playing with Toy Animals

# Sharing Group Experiences



## Group Time Activities

Enjoying Our Favorite Toys  
Learning About Jesus  
As a Child  
Hearing About Handmade Toys  
Hearing About Relatives' Favorite Toys  
Giving Toys to Other Children



## Outdoor Time Activities

Playing with Toys  
Taking Toys Outside  
Enjoying Toys with Wheels  
Being Creative with Boxes  
Playing with Toys in the Sand  
Running, Jumping, and Climbing



## Snack Time Activities

Enjoying a Wintertime Snack  
Enjoying Teddy Bear Cookies  
Making Gingerbread Men



## Rest Time Activities

Resting with a Favorite Toy  
Settling for Rest Time  
Having a Silent Rest Time  
Putting Away Towels



# UNIT 8

## I Have Favorite Toys

### Purpose

The purpose of this unit is to give children opportunities to use and talk about their favorite toys and help them become aware of the kinds of toys Jesus might have played with when He was a child.

### Concepts to Be Emphasized

- I have special toys that I enjoy more than other toys.
- Children who lived during Bible times also had toys.
- I can help choose my toys.
- Some toys are bought at the store; other toys are handmade.
- My family members and friends enjoy favorite toys.

### Guidance Tips

During December three-year-olds' thoughts naturally turn to toys. However, sharing their toys is next to impossible for threes. Taking turns is easier. Provide guidance as children learn to take turns with friends.

When planning activities for this unit, be aware that children who are allergic to molds and dust may have problems with stuffed animals. If you have children with these type allergies, substitute plastic or vinyl animals or toys. Because of allergies and sanitation concerns, do not provide stuffed animals on an ongoing basis.

When you ask parents to help their child choose a favorite toy to bring to school, request that the toy not be violence-related such as a toy gun or Super Hero figure. Ask parents to label the toy with the child's name.

Guide the children as they work on projects relating to giving toys to boys and girls who need them. Help the children move toward an understanding that God wants them to show kindness to others.

### Spiritual Emphasis

#### Bible Verses and Bible Thoughts

"Be kind to one another" (Eph. 4:32).

"God made me" (Ps. 119:73).

"I thank God" (2 Tim. 1:3).

"We work together" (1 Cor. 3:9).

#### Bible Story

When Jesus Was a Child

## When Jesus Was a Child

(Based on Luke 2:39-40 and archaeological research)

Long, long ago Jesus was a child—just like you.

Jesus had friends—just like you.

Jesus liked to have happy times—just like you.

When Jesus was a child, He lived with His family in the town of Nazareth. Jesus grew bigger and bigger and stronger and stronger. Jesus went to school, and He played with His friends.

The Bible does not tell us what kinds of games and toys Jesus played with, but people who study about Bible times have given us some ideas.

Maybe Jesus had fun playing with toys made from clay. Perhaps Mary shaped the clay.

Squeeze and pull. Mash and roll. Pat,

pat, pat. Maybe Mary made a clay doll for Jesus.

Perhaps Jesus had fun playing with wooden toys, too. Joseph was a carpenter. A carpenter builds things from wood. Joseph might have made wooden toys for Jesus. Maybe Joseph made a toy lamb with wheels that could roll. Maybe he made a toy boat that Jesus could float in the river.

People who study about Bible times say Jesus and His friends might have played with other toys, too. Perhaps they had whistles, balls, rattles, spinning tops, and hoops.

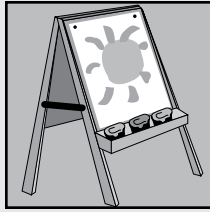
Jesus had different kinds of toys to play with—just like you!

Maybe Jesus had a favorite toy—just like you!



# Learning Centers

## Art Center



**A**rrange on a shelf in the center several toys made from scrap materials. For example, include paper airplanes, paper-bag puppets, wallpaper kites, and cardboard-tube binoculars. Place picture books showing toys near these items.

### Making Toys

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Collect various types of materials from which children can create their own toys. For example, include crayons, scissors, paste, construction paper, wallpaper cut into kite shapes, cardboard tubes, masking tape, string, paper bags, tissue paper, rubber bands, and fabric scraps.

Invite the children to create their own toy inventions. The examples on the shelf can provide a stimulus for children who have trouble thinking of ideas on their own. You may need to assist a child in cutting string and fabric scraps to the size she needs or attaching parts of a toy with string or masking tape.

As the children work, sing the following song to the familiar tune “The Farmer in the Dell”:

### Making Our Own Toys

We’re making our own toys.  
We’re making our own toys.  
Tra, la, la; tra, la, la, la!  
We’re making our own toys.

### Painting with Toys

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Mix two colors of tempera paint to a creamy consistency. Pour the paint into two shallow containers. Provide large sheets of newsprint and small toy vehicles with wheels that roll.

Ask each child to print his name on a sheet of newsprint. (If a child cannot print his name legibly, you probably can recognize his signature by this time of year.) Show the child how to dip the wheel portion of a vehicle in the paint and roll it across the newsprint. Ask him to keep his hand on the vehicle as he rolls it. He can make designs and criss-cross roadways as he paints with the toy vehicle.

When you notice the children taking turns with the vehicles, relate the Bible thoughts “We work together” (1 Cor. 3:9) and “Be kind to one another” (Eph. 4:32) to their activity.

### Making Wind Toys

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Cut a cardboard hoop for each child. Make each hoop approximately 6 inches in diameter. Cut five or six crepe paper streamers for each child approximately 1½ inches wide and 12 to 18 inches long. Use winter or Christmas colors. If you use Christmas colors, tie a jingle bell to each hoop. Be sure the bells are well secured.



Show the children how to lay the cardboard hoop on the table and squeeze a small amount of glue around the surface. Ask each child to choose five or six streamers and place them on the glue around the hoop. (This provides a natural opportunity to practice counting.) Allow the hoops to dry. Use them during outdoor play or save them to send home with the children.

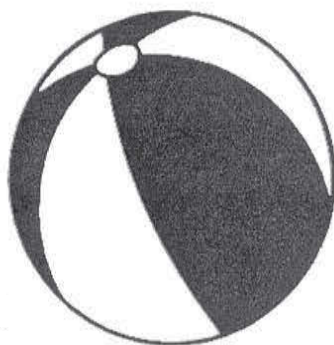
## Pasting Pictures of Toys

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Collect advertisement brochures from toy stores and department stores. Many mail-order houses print a special Christmas toy catalog. Locate several of these catalogs and place them on the shelf. Provide paste, scissors, crayons, and manila paper.

Invite the children to tear or cut out pictures of toys from the brochures and catalogs. (If you think your threes will have trouble cutting and tearing, cut out the pictures place them in a shallow box.)

Show the girls and boys how to spread paste on the back of a picture and press it on a sheet of manila paper. As the children work, talk with them the about toy pictures they select.

Listen as they talk about their favorite toys. Ask children where they shop for toys. Sing the song "It's Fun to Be Together."



## Using Clay

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Purchase pottery clay or prepare play dough using one of the recipes in the Appendix.

Give the children the freedom to roll, pound, punch, and mold the clay. If a child makes a figure and names it, offer to save it for her to take home.

As the children work, mention that Jesus might have played with toys that were made from clay. The clay would not have been bought from a store or cooked on the stove. It was probably clay that someone dug from the ground—a little like stiff mud.

Sing the song "Jesus Was a Child."

## Making a Paper-Bag Puppet

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Provide paper bags; scissors; crayons; paste; and construction paper shapes such as small circles, triangles, and rectangles. Find a picture-story version of the folktale "Pinocchio."

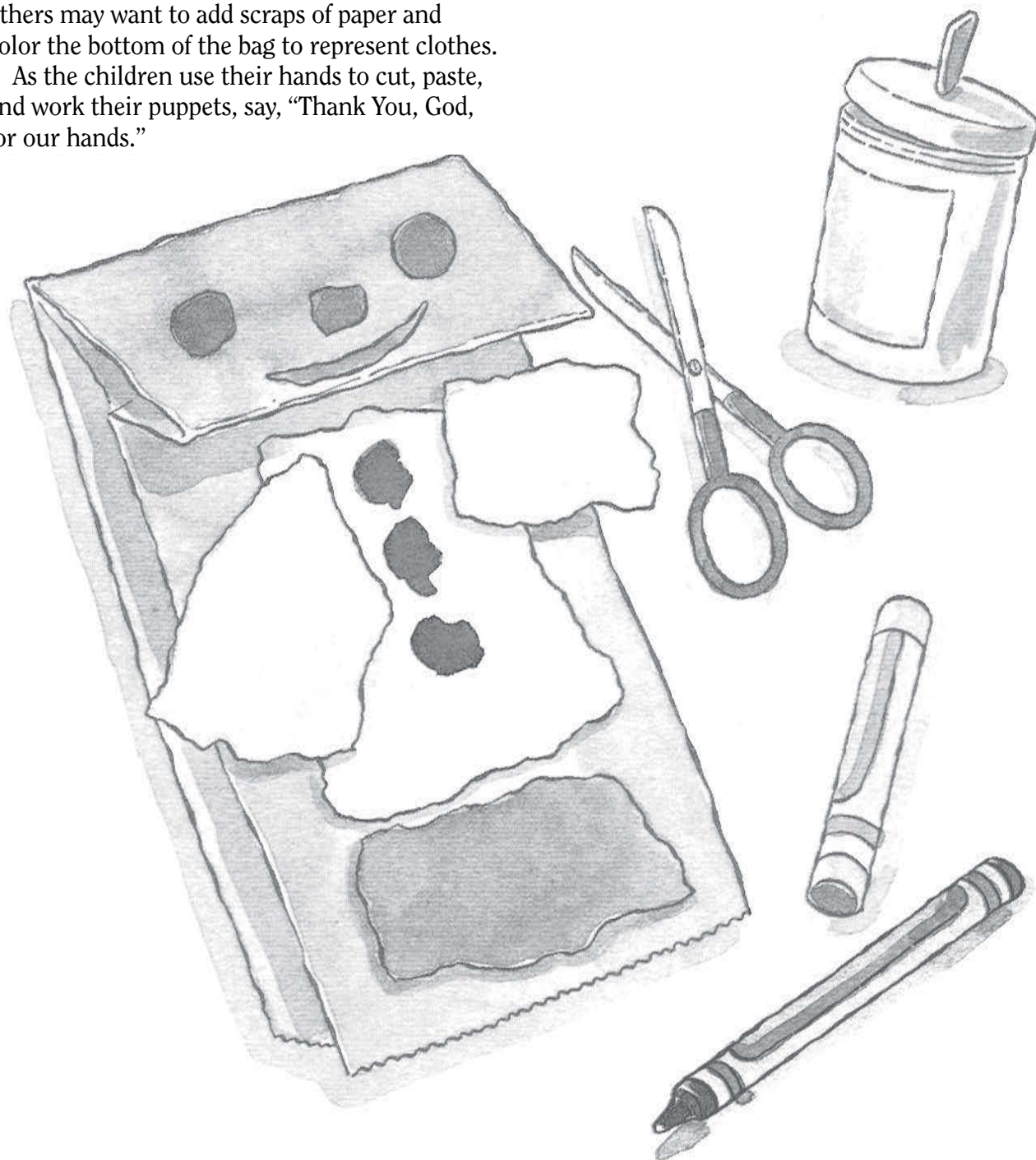
Use the storybook to tell a simple version of "Pinocchio." Talk with the children about Pinocchio by saying: "Pinocchio was a wooden puppet. The man in the story made the puppet from wood. After the man made the puppet, it turned into a little boy. This is a pretend story because puppets do not come alive. Sometimes it's fun to pretend."

Invite the children to make paper-bag puppets. After hearing the story, some children might decide to make a puppet of Pinocchio. Show the children the bottom flap of a bag. Explain that

this part will be the face of the puppet. Place your hand inside the bag and show the children how the puppet will work.

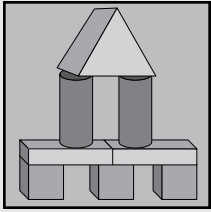
Suggest that the children use crayons or construction paper shapes to make the face of the puppet on the bag flap. Some children will be finished after making a puppet face; others may want to add scraps of paper and color the bottom of the bag to represent clothes.

As the children use their hands to cut, paste, and work their puppets, say, "Thank You, God, for our hands."



# Learning Centers

## Block Center



Open a toy catalog to the section that shows blocks and block accessories and place it near the unit blocks.

### Enjoying Unit Blocks

As the children work with the unit blocks, talk with them about how they were made. Feel the smooth, hard surface of one of the blocks. Look at the blocks and block accessories in the toy catalog. Tell the children about how the blocks in your classroom were purchased.

As you observe children who are having fun with blocks, comment: "You look like you are having fun playing with blocks. God want us to have fun."

### Playing Toy Store

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Near the unit blocks place small toys, a sign "Toy Store," and paper play money.

Read the sign to the children. Talk about using the unit blocks to build shelves for a toy store. After offering this suggestion, give the children time to decide what they will build. Some threes may enjoy building a toy store while others may simply stack the toys on top of the structures they build. Give each child the freedom to determine her own style of dramatic play.

### Playing with Vehicles

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Place wooden toy vehicles near the unit blocks. Include a wooden

car, truck, and airplane. Try to locate someone in your community who makes wooden toy vehicles. Purchase a few of these toys to add to the vehicles in the center. Often this type of toy is sold at craft fairs. Invite the craft person to visit, bring handmade toys to show, and play with the children in the center.

Talk with the children about the vehicles. Point out that some of the vehicles were ordered from a catalog or bought at a store. Show the children these vehicles. Explain that some of the toys were made by a person at home and that these are called handmade toys.

If you invited a craft person, introduce him or her to the children. Explain that a friend who makes toys will be playing in the center today.

### Using Paper Towel Tubes

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Collect a large quantity of paper towel tubes. Place the tubes in a basket.

Watch as the children add the tubes to their structures. Look for an opportunity to point out that the structures with tubes are handmade toys.

Opportunities may arise to relate the Bible thoughts "We work together" (1 Cor. 3:9) and "Be kind to one another" (Eph. 4:32) to block play. Use the Bible thoughts only when you see children working together or being kind. Do not

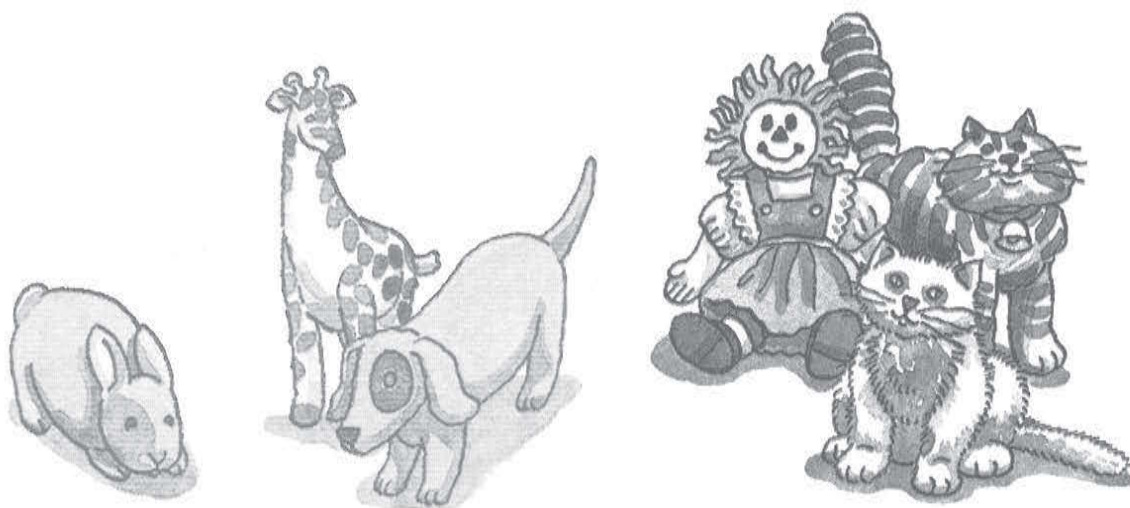


use Bible thoughts to point out inappropriate behavior. For example, when children are squabbling, it is inappropriate to comment: "You seem to be having trouble working together. The Bible tells us to be kind to one another."

### **Building a House for a Toy**

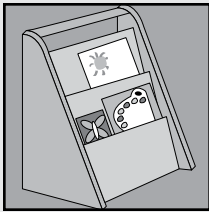
Place several toy animals and dolls in the center. Suggest that the children use the blocks to build houses for the toys.

As the children work, use comments to help them develop concepts related to size. For example, say: "The toy rabbit is big. It will take many long blocks to build a house big enough for the rabbit." Or "The doll is small. Perhaps you could build a house for her with the short blocks."



# Learning Centers

## Book and Listening Center



**D**isplay the teaching picture “Reading a Bedtime Story.” Arrange toy animals and dolls near the books. When the children express an interest in the toys, suggest that they read a favorite story to them.

### Listening to Books About Toys

Provide several books that relate to toys. For example, include *My Doll*, *Keshia*; *Baby Bop’s Toys*; *I Play in My Room*; and *Where’s My Teddy?* Offer to read to one or two children at a time. Read the books slowly and enjoy them together. Point out the teddy bear in the teaching picture “Reading a Bedtime Story.” Listen as the children talk about their teddy bears or other favorite toys.

### Telling a Story with a Puppet

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Purchase or make puppets that represent people or storybook characters.

If the children have not used puppets before, model using them. For example, ask each interested child to choose a puppet and you choose one, too. Begin with conversation such as: “This story is about a mama bear, a papa bear, a baby bear, and Goldilocks. Angela is the mama bear, Matthew is the papa bear, Mike is the baby bear, and I am Goldilocks.” When you are sure each child knows which character her puppet represents, tell the story. Pause for each character to move or speak in turn. After playing out the story a few times, usually threes will enjoy working with friends to use the puppets independently.

### Looking at Toy Catalogs

Provide mail-order toy catalogs and advertisement brochures from toy stores. Invite the children to look through the catalogs and brochures and pick out favorite toys. Talk with them about their choices. Make comments that will stimulate children to think about their choices. For example, say: “A wagon is a good choice for you, Mike. You like to play outside. I noticed you chose a toy gun, too. Sometimes guns hurt people. I know you don’t want to hurt anyone.”

### Enjoying Wordless Picture Books

Provide a few picture books that do not have text. Alexandra Day has written several wordless picture books about a dog named Carl and his family. These books are favorites that children of all ages enjoy. Several of Day’s books are: *Good Dog, Carl*; *Carl Goes to Daycare*; and *Carl Goes Shopping*. Threes will enjoy looking at these books alone, with a friend, or with you. Encourage a child to tell a story as she looks at one of the books.

## Making a Book of Favorite Toys

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Staple together sheets of construction paper to form a book. Provide one sheet for each child in your group. If you have a large group of children, staple together paper to make two books. Provide photographs or catalog pictures of the favorite toys children brought to school. (See “Guidance Tips” on page 245.)

Work with the children to make a book titled “Our Favorite Toys.” Each child pastes a photograph or picture of his favorite toy on a page of the book. Print words across the bottom of each page. For example, print: “Jessie has a favorite toy. It is a wagon.” Follow the same pattern for each page of the book.

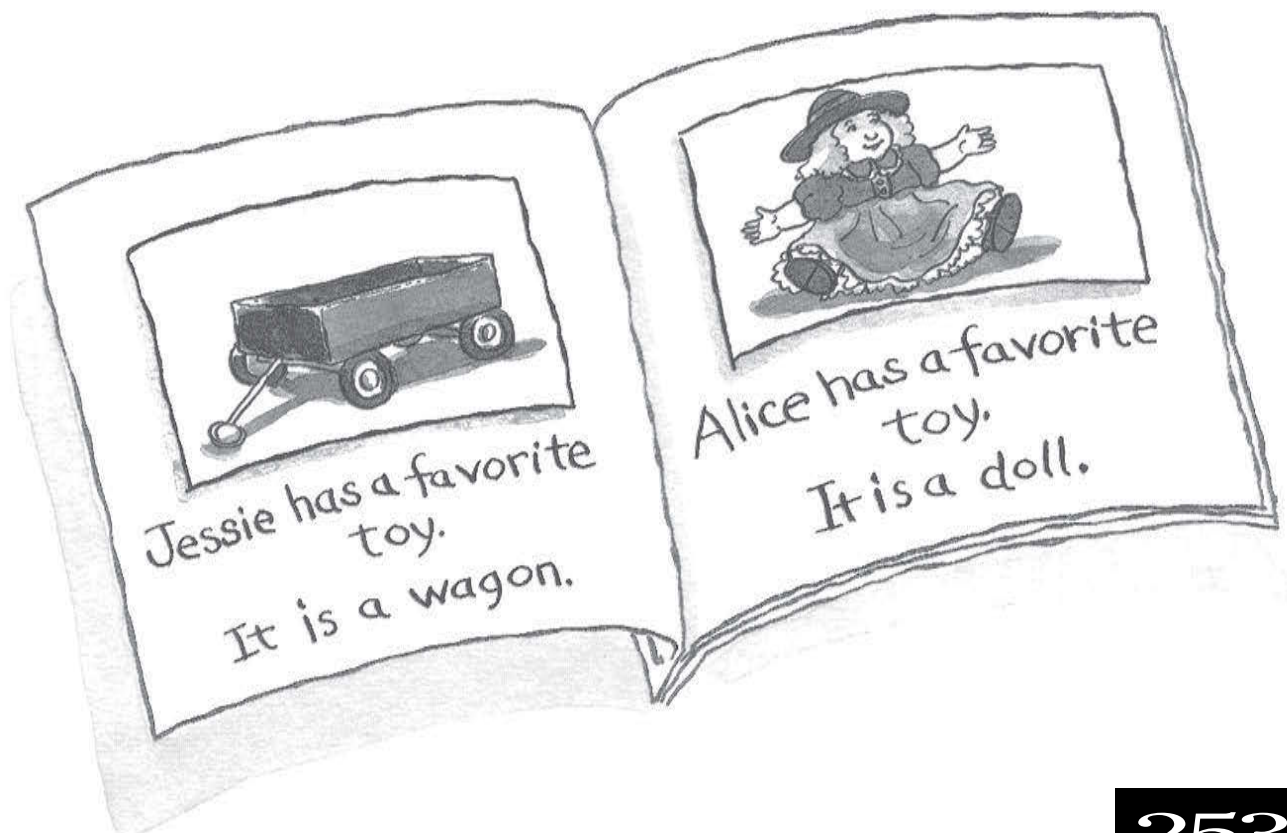
Read the book to the children. Point to each word as you read. Call attention to friends’ names and the alphabet letters with which they begin. As threes become familiar with the pattern of the text, they may begin to read along with you.

## Reading About Toy Bears

Teddy bears are favorite toys for many young children. Don Freeman has written several books about teddy bears. The titles of a few of these books are: *Corduroy*, *A Pocket for Corduroy*, *Corduroy’s Christmas*, and *Beady Bear*. As you read these books with the children, call attention to the author’s name. Explain that an author is a person who writes books. These books about bears were written by a man named Don Freeman.

## Learning Important Concepts

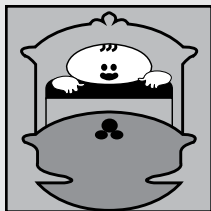
Purchase several books that will help children become more aware of concepts like colors, shapes, numbers, and letters. Concept books that relate to the topic of toys are: *Ten Bears in a Bed*, *Alphabears: An ABC Book*, and *Numbears: A Counting Book*. Also include favorite concept books from previous units. As you use the books with the children, help them relate the concepts to their personal experiences. For example, take 10 teddy bears to the doll bed in the homeliving center and role-play the book *Ten Bears in a Bed*.





# Learning Centers

## Homeliving Center



**B**ring a toy box for the center or make one from a grocery store carton. In the toy box place toys for the baby dolls and threes who pretend to be the children during dramatic play.

### Shopping for Toys

Help the children build a toy store near the center. Make shelves from cardboard boxes. Stock the shelves with toys from your supply cabinet. Place a \$1 price label on each toy. Provide a toy cash register and paper bags. Put three or four dollars of play money in the purses and wallets in the center. Place paper and pencils on the kitchen table so the children can make shopping lists.

As you work with the children to build the toy store, talk about times when they shop at toy stores. Listen as the children tell about how they decide which toy to buy.

Make a list of children who want a turn to be the cashier, bag/stock person, and customers. Guide the dramatic play for a few days until the children learn the routine.

Encourage customers to make a trip to the store to look at toys. After they see toys they want to buy, suggest that they make a shopping list. Some children may scribble, others may print letters, and many will draw pictures of the toys they plan to buy.

Help the children count their dollars when they pay for the toys. Explain that they must have one dollar for each toy.

Relate the Bible thoughts “We work together” (1 Cor. 3:9) and “Be kind to one another”

(Eph. 4:32) to this activity. Sing the song “It’s Fun to Be Together.”

### Playing with Handmade Toys

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Locate someone in your community who makes rag dolls or refurbishes old dolls. Invite this person to visit your pre-school room, bring several of her handmade dolls, and play with the children.

Show the dolls to the children and introduce the visitor. Explain that some toys are handmade. For example, say: “Handmade toys are made by a person and not a machine. These toys are not usually sold in catalogs or stores. They must be bought from the person who makes them.” Look at the handmade toys and compare them with the commercial dolls in the center.

Weave the Bible thought “I thank God” (2 Tim. 1:3) into conversation. Thank God for friends who make toys for us to enjoy.

### Having a Tea Party

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Arrange a tea set on the table in the center. Include a small, clean pitcher containing water; paper cups; colorful, dessert-size paper plates; and a tray of plain cookies such as vanilla wafers. Prop two teddy

bears or dolls in chairs as if they are seated at the table.

As children arrive, explain that today is tea party day for the teddy bears. Invite two children at a time to join the bears and have fun at the tea party.

Be available to assist. Supply more water for the pitcher and add more cookies as they are needed for the tea parties.



## Playing Checkers

Place a checkerboard and checkers on a table. This is not a game three-year-olds can learn to play “by the rules.” However, the children will enjoy moving the checkers from square to square, stacking them, and matching colors. If children have seen the game played at home, they may try to play it with a friend. Allow the children to make up their own rules as they play together.

Tell the children that Jesus might have played a game something like checkers when he was a child. Sing the song “Jesus Was a Child.”

## Looking at Catalogs

Place Christmas mail-order catalogs in a basket near the rocking chair. Provide paper and pencils for making wish lists.

Invite the children to look at the catalogs and think about toys they would like to have. Suggest that each child make a list of toys he would like to have.

## Wrapping Toys for Gifts

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Talk with the children about boys and girls who do not have many toys. Ask if they would like to give some of their good toys to these children. If the preschoolers seem interested, locate a needy family with preschool-aged children in your church or community. Contact the family to learn if they would be interested in receiving toys for their children. Jot down the ages of the preschoolers and their interests. Send home a note to parents of your children explaining the project. Ask the parents to help their child pick out one of his toys that is in excellent condition or take him shopping to pick out a new toy to

bring to school. Provide colorful paper bags or brown bags that have been decorated, wrapping paper, tape, and ready-made sticky bows.

Talk with the children about collecting toys, wrapping them, and taking them to the needy family. After the toys are brought to school, plan a gift-wrapping day in the center. Help the children wrap the toys in colorful paper bags or decorated brown bags. Some three-year-olds may be developmentally ready to use wrapping paper to cover a toy. Show them how to roll the gift in the paper. You will need to secure the wrapping paper with tape. The children can add bows to decorate the gifts.

As the children work, talk about how happy the family will be to receive the toys. Use the Bible thought “Be kind to one another” (Eph. 4:32) in conversation.

## Playing with Toy Animals

Arrange several small, toy animals on the doll bed. As the preschoolers play out family situations, the toy animals may assume the roles of pet dogs or cats, toys for the dolls, or toys for the “children” in a family.

When you see happy children playing together, sing the following words to the song “I Am Happy”:

### **Teresa Is Happy**

Teresa is happy,  
Jessica is happy,  
They’re having fun today.

Comment: “You look like you are having fun. God wants us to have fun with our friends.”



# Learning Centers

## Music Center



**L**ocate pictures of children using musical toys and display the pictures at the children's eye level. Print the Bible thought "I thank God" (2 Timothy 1:3) on a strip of paper and place it near the pictures. Look for opportunities to read the Bible thought with a child and talk about the toys in the pictures.

### Making Handmade Instruments

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Collect empty, clear plastic bottles with caps. Wash the bottles and remove the labels; allow the bottles to dry thoroughly. Provide noise-making items and colorful scraps of paper that children can drop into the bottles. For example, include jingle bells, shells, pebbles, and colorful pom-poms. Provide a cassette of instrumental music with a steady beat.

Invite the children to select objects to drop into the bottles. Remind them that they want their instruments to look pretty and to sound pretty. Explain that if they put something in and decide they do not like the way it sounds or looks, it's OK to dump the objects out and start again.

Play the cassette of music. Suggest that some children play the store-bought instruments while others play the handmade instruments.

*Note:* Watch small objects carefully to be sure the children do not put them in their mouths.

### Using Rhythm Instruments

Provide rhythm band instruments and place them in containers near the cassette tape player. The Toddler Rhythm Band Instruments set is designed for young preschoolers and is safe for

threes to use independently. Provide the cassette of instrumental music that was used in the previous activity "Making Handmade Instruments."

Invite the children to use the instruments as they listen to the music. Be available to observe and help with social problems if needed. Thank God for the fun that boys and girls have with toys.

### Pretending to Be Toys

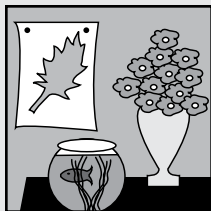
Prop a Raggedy Ann or Raggedy Andy doll near the cassette tape player. Play the selection "Rag Doll" and ask the children to listen and watch. Move the rag doll following the instructions that are given. When the selection finishes, give the children an opportunity to hold the doll and watch its head and arms flop around.

Play the selection again. This time invite the children to move like rag dolls as they listen.



# Learning Centers

## Nature and Science Center



**C**ut pictures of mechanical toys from catalogs and advertisements. Mount the pictures on construction paper and display them at the children's eye level. Print the caption "Toys That Move" on a strip of paper and place it below the pictures.

### Using Bathtub Toys

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Collect plastic, rubber, and sponge toys that are designed for bathtub play. Place the toys in a shallow container such as a small, plastic swimming pool or large plastic tub. Pour in enough water to cover the bottom of the container and to allow the objects to float. Provide plastic aprons and large towels.

Watch as the children enjoy the bathtub toys. Use the words *float*, *sink*, and *absorb* in conversation as you talk with the children. While threes cannot fully understand these concepts, they will begin to relate your words to their experiences.

### Weighing Toys

Provide a commercial bucket balance scale and toys that will fit in the buckets. Show the children how to arrange toys in the buckets and watch the scale until it balances. Talk about what is happening to help the children understand what they are doing. For example, say: "We put a big car in the bucket on this side. We put one small car in the bucket on the other side, but the bucket didn't come up. When we put another small car on the other side, the bucket came up a little bit but not enough. We put another small car on the other side and look what happened! The bucket came up to just the same place as the

big car's bucket." Repeat the activity by weighing toys from other centers in the room.

### Lining Up Toys

Provide the book *The Line Up Book* and a box that contains various types of toys. Look at the book with the children and point out the pictures of the toys the boy lined up. Talk about the fun he must have had as he lined up toys from one room to the next.

Play a lineup game with the toys in the box. Line up toys from one end of the nature shelf to the other end. Line up toys from the homeliving center to the block center. Line up toys from one end of the block shelf to the other. This activity helps threes form beginning concepts relating to measurement. Be sure each toy is touching the toy in front of it and the toy behind it. Be sure the toys are in single file and not two toys side by side.

### Observing Windup Toys

Provide several inexpensive windup toys for the children to explore. Help the children discover answers to questions such as: What happens when you wind the toy just a little? What happens when you wind the toy a lot? Which toy moves the fastest? What happens when the toy bumps into a shelf?

As the children enjoy the activity, sing the following song to the familiar tune “Did You Ever See a Lassie?”:

### **Did You Ever See a Windup Toy?**

Did you ever see a windup toy,  
A windup toy, a windup toy?  
Did you ever see a windup toy  
Go this way and that?  
Go this way and that way?  
Go this way and that way?  
Did you ever see a windup toy  
Go this way and that?



### **Experimenting with Spinning Tops**

Collect several different types and sizes of spinning tops. Show the children how to pump the tops to make them spin. Work with the children to conduct experiments such as the following:

- Pump two tops. Watch to see which top spins longer. Repeat the experiment several times. Does the same top spin longer each time?
- Listen for the sounds the tops make as they spin. How are they alike or different?
- Pump two tops. Put one top in a box and the other top on the floor. Which top spins longer?
- Include simple tops that do not need to be pumped. Experiment with making these tops spin. Talk about how these tops are alike and different from the pump-type tops.

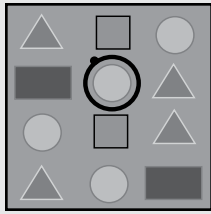
Encourage the children to help think of other experiments. As you work, say: “Jesus might have played with spinning tops when He was a boy. Jesus’ spinning tops were probably a little different from the spinning tops boys and girls use now. Maybe Jesus played with a clay or wooden top.”





# Learning Centers

## Puzzles and Manipulatives



**P**lace a school supply catalog on a table or shelf in the center. Open the catalog to the puzzles and manipulatives section. Challenge the children to find some of the toys in the center on the pages of the catalog.

### Working Puzzles

Provide several puzzles that show toys. For example, include “Easy Shapes and Colors,” “Our Toys,” “Many Lengths Crayons,” “Balloon Colors,” “Teddy Bear,” and the Battat Simplex Playboard Puzzle that depicts toys. As the children work, talk with them about the toys pictured. Ask which toys they already have or would like to have. Ask them to tell you about toys they enjoy.

Use the Bible thought “God made me” (Ps. 119:73) in conversation. For example, say: “God made me. He gave me hands to work puzzles and eyes to see where to put the pieces.”

### Using Rainbow Blocks

Rainbow Blocks are plastic manipulative toys that can be used to make patterns, shapes, or objects. Watch as the children work with friends. Encourage the children to take turns using favorite colors and sizes. Weave the Bible thought “We work together” (1 Cor. 3:9) into conversation.

### Sorting Caps and Lids

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Collect various types of caps and lids from bottles and jars. Choose large caps so the children will not be tempted to put them in their mouths.

Help the girls and boys think of various ways to sort the lids such as by color, size, metal/plastic, and words/no words. As the children work, sing the following song to the familiar tune “The Farmer in the Dell”:

### Playing with the Lids

We’re playing with the lids.  
We’re playing with the lids.  
Tra, la, la; tra, la, la, la!  
We’re playing with the lids.

### Building Toys with Bolt ’N Play

Bolt ’N Play manipulative set includes 84 giant-sized, strong plastic pieces. The pieces can be bolted together in a variety of ways to make riding toys, robots, and other large toys.

Work with the children to help them learn to bolt the plastic pieces together. Talk about making toys. Perhaps some of the children might like to be toy makers when they grow up.

### Using Tinkertoy Manipulatives

Tinkertoy manipulatives are giant-sized and easy for threes to handle. As the children work, talk

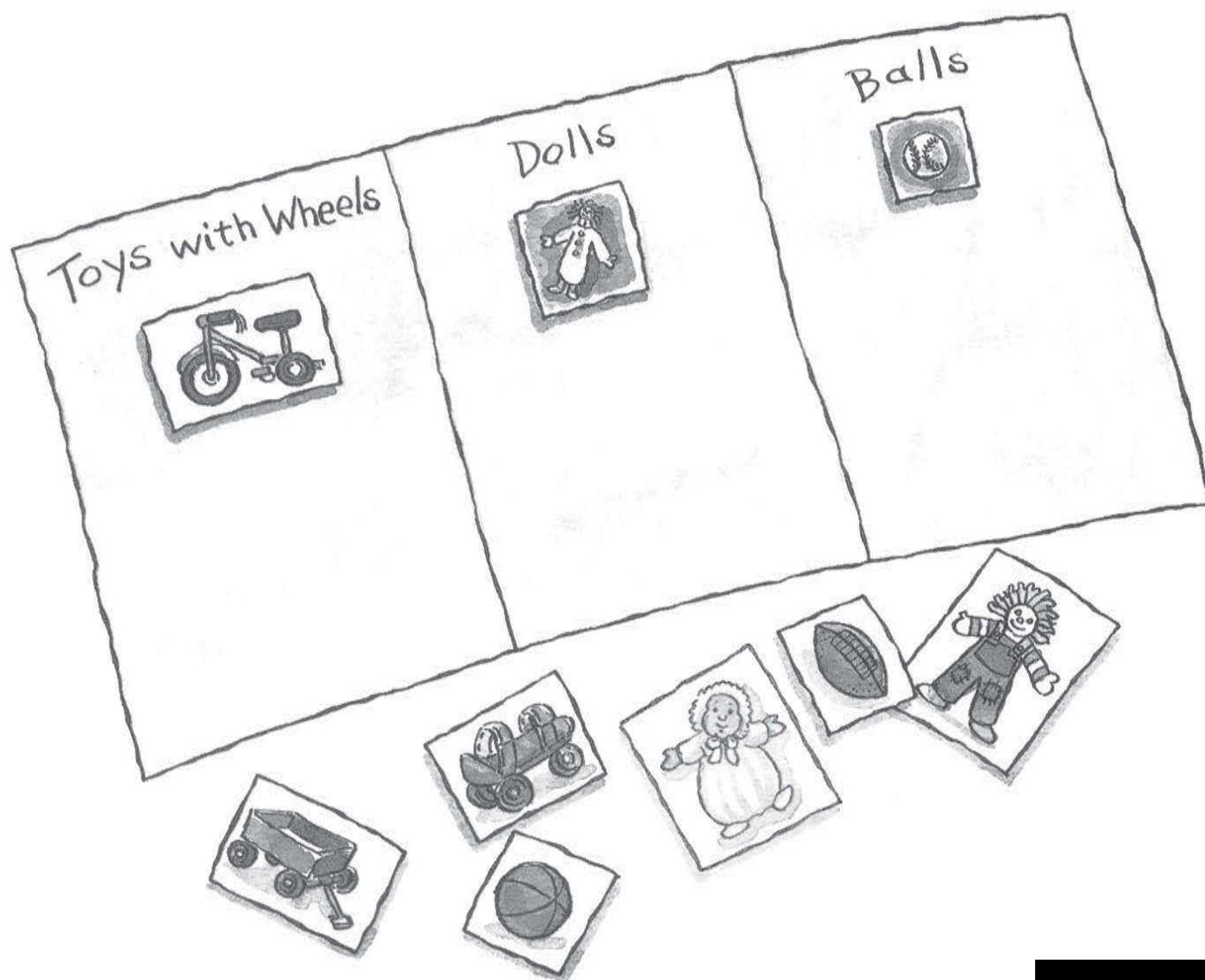
with them about the shapes they are using. Help a child describe the structure she is making. Explain that these manipulatives have been a favorite toy for many people. Perhaps the child's parents or grandparents played with them.

## Sorting Toys

➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Cut a long piece of white paper and divide it into three sections. Print one of the following titles at the top of each section: "Toys with Wheels," "Dolls," or "Balls." Paste a corresponding picture below each title. Cut out pictures of toys that fit these three categories. (You may prefer to choose other categories. Be sure to select categories that fit the de-

velopmental level of the preschoolers you teach. Other possible categories are: red toys, yellow toys, blue toys and toys we ride, toys we climb, and toys we put together.) Provide paste.

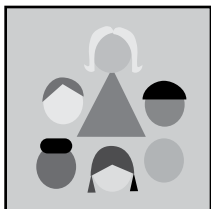
Read the titles to the children and show them the pictures. Explain that you would like them to work together to paste the pictures in groups. Demonstrate by sorting a few of the pictures into groups on the paper. For example, place pictures of a tricycle, wagon, and car under the title "Toys with Wheels." Watch as the children work. Listen as they talk about their toys. Help them describe the pictures they are pasting. For example, say: "The toy is round. It is blue. It is a ball. Where do you think it goes?"



# Sharing Group Experiences

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## Group Time Activities



This unit on toys provides an excellent opportunity for involving community resource people and family members as visitors during group experiences. Study the activities in advance to plan for meaningful classroom visitors. Before the visitors come, explain to them that three-year-olds are just learning to listen in a group and that information should be kept simple and brief. Ask the visitors to bring toys to show to the children if possible.

### Enjoying Our Favorite Toys

**Play the selection** “Rag Doll.”—**Prepare Ahead:** Send a note home asking parents to let their child bring a favorite toy to school.

As children finish cleaning up center activities, encourage them to move like rag dolls as they listen to the music. Ask each child to bring her favorite toy to the group area.

**Introduce the group experience.**—Show the teaching picture “My Favorite Toy.” Explain that today we will be talking about our favorite toys. Call attention to the favorite toys the children brought to group time.

**Say the finger play** “Teddy Bears” (see Appendix). If some of the children brought teddy bears, count the number of bears friends brought to school.



**Sing the song** “It’s Fun to Be Together.” Sing the song again using the following words:

### **It’s Fun to Be Together**

It’s fun to be together,  
I like the toys you brought.  
It’s fun to be together,  
I like to be with you!

**Arrange the toys in groups.**—Place the toys in the center of the group area. Ask the children to sit in a circle around the toys. Give each child his toy. Ask him to tell the group the toy’s name and where he got it. Work with the children to think of ways their toys are alike or different. Help them arrange the toys in groups that are alike in some way. For example, make groups of dolls, toys that move, and toys for building. Look at each group of toys with the children. Try to form smaller groups such as: dolls with hair/dolls without hair; toy animals; and cars/trucks/planes. Your goal is to help the children learn to observe closely and to group objects that are alike. Continue the activity as long as the children show interest.

**Stand and clap** as you sing the following song to the familiar tune “Skip to My Lou”:

### **I Like Toys**

I like toys.  
How about you?  
I like toys.  
How about you?  
I like toys.  
How about you?  
Tra, la, la, la, la, la, la.

**Conclude the group experience.**—Thank the children for bringing their toys to share. Explain that they will take the toys home today.



## Learning About Jesus As a Child

**Strum the Autoharp and sing the song** “It’s Fun to Be Together.”  
Sing the song again using the following words:

### **It’s Fun to Play**

It’s fun to play with dolls,  
I like the things we do.  
It’s fun to play with blocks,  
I like to be with you!

Ask the children to name toys they enjoy. Sing about the toys they name.

**Introduce the group experience.**—Explain that today the children will learn about some of the toys with which Jesus might have played.

**Sing the song** “Jesus Was a Child.” Sing the song again using the following words:

### **Jesus Was a Child**

Jesus was a child,  
A child just like me;  
He laughed and played with toys  
With His friends and family.

**Tell the Bible story.**— **Prepare Ahead:** Bring a small amount of pottery clay to group time. Pottery clay will air dry and harden.

Open the Read-to-Me Bible to Luke 2:39-40 and tell the Bible story “When Jesus Was a Child.” Give children time to talk about their ideas relating to Jesus’ favorite toys.

Show the children a lump of clay. Explain that clay is really hard, sticky dirt. Jesus’ mother might have dug some clay out of the ground to make Jesus a toy. Invite the children to feel the clay. Mold a little doll. Explain that the doll will harden if it is left in the sunshine for many days. (Put the doll in a safe place to harden. Show it to the children after it has dried.)

**Pray** thanking God for happy times with friends.

**Stand and say the finger play** “Teddy Bears” (see Appendix). Select five volunteers to role-play the teddy bears as the other children chant the rhyme.

**Conclude the group experience.**—Show the teaching picture “When Jesus Was a Child.” Ask questions such as: What kind of toy did Joseph make? Would you like to have a toy made by a carpenter? What toy would you choose?

## **Hearing About Handmade Toys**

(Invite a person who makes toys to visit during this group activity.)

**Strum the Autoharp and sing the song** “Jesus Was a Child.” Recall with the children the information about toys from Bible times.

**Introduce the group experience.**—Introduce the visitor and explain that she is a toymaker. Tell the children that a little later she will show them some of her work.

**Stand and say the finger play** “Teddy Bears” (see Appendix). Choose five children to role-play the parts of teddy bears as friends chant the rhyme.

**Talk about handmade toys.**—Hold up a toy catalog. Explain that all the toys in the catalog can be ordered or bought in a store. Pause and let the children point to favorite toys. Say: “Today’s visitor makes a different kind of toy. The toys she makes are handmade.” Give the visitor time to show the toys she brought and to talk with the children about how she made them.

If you cannot find a toymaker, bring a handmade toy to group time. Compare it with a similar store-bought toy. Talk about ways the two toys are alike and different. Give the children who made toys in the art center an opportunity to describe and show the toys they made.

**Stand and sing the song** “I Like the Things You Do.” Sing the song again and clap the rhythm as you sing.

**Conclude the group experience.**—Show the teaching picture “When Jesus Was a Child.” Remind the children that Jesus played with handmade toys. Give the children time to tell the visitor a few things about toys from Bible times. Thank the visitor for coming.

## **Hearing About Relatives’ Favorite Toys**

(Invite children’s parents or grandparents to visit and tell about their favorite childhood toys or games.)

**Strum the Autoharp and sing the songs** “Jesus Was a Child” and “It’s Fun to Be Together.”

**Introduce the group experience.**—Explain that family members have come to tell about their favorite toys and games.

**Talk with family members.**—If you have only one visitor, remain in a large group. If you have several visitors, divide into small groups. Be sure children who have relatives present are in the same small

group as the relative. Give the relatives time to talk, show their toys, and answer children's questions. (Usually threes do not have questions, but like to talk with visitors about their own experiences. Allow time for this type of conversation.)

**Sing the song** "I Like the Things You Do." Ask the children to come back to the large group. Talk about whether the visitors' toys were handmade or bought in a store.

**Tell the following story** if you did not invite visitors:

### **Elizabeth's Bear**

When Elizabeth's mother was a little girl, she had a fuzzy-wuzzy, soft and cuddly bear. Elizabeth's mother loved her bear. Every day she took her bear to school with her.

Years went by and Elizabeth's mother grew older. She met Jason and she married him. Then Jason and Elizabeth's mother had a lovely, tiny baby girl named Elizabeth!

When Elizabeth was three-years-old, she got sick and had to go to the hospital. Elizabeth's mother stayed with her in the hospital.

"I want to go home," cried Elizabeth.

"We can't go home yet, Honey," said Elizabeth's mother.

"We have to stay here so you can get well."



Elizabeth's mother whispered something in Jason's ear. Remember, Jason is Elizabeth's father.

Jason hurried home. He pulled down the steps and climbed into the attic. He looked in one box. No, what he was looking for wasn't there. He looked in another box. There it was—just as Elizabeth's mother had said it would be.

*(Pause and ask, "What do you think Jason found?")*

Jason hurried to the hospital. He had a big bag. Something special was in the bag.

Elizabeth's mother peeped into the bag. "Oh, Jason! You found it! Thank you," she said.

Elizabeth's mother put her hand in the bag and pulled out a fuzzy-wuzzy, soft and cuddly teddy bear.

"This is for you, Elizabeth," she said. "It was my bear when I was a little girl. It will make you feel better."

Elizabeth loved the bear just as much as her mother did. And when she got out of the hospital, she took it to preschool every day!

**Conclude the group experience.**—Thank the visitors for coming to preschool. Talk about the types of toys the family members brought. Remind children that today we learned that parents and grandparents enjoy toys, too. Thank God for happy times with friends and family.

## **Giving Toys to Other Children**

(This group experience is a follow-up activity that relates to the homeliving center activity "Wrapping Toys for Gifts.")

**Play the selection** "Rag Doll." Stand and move with the children.

**Introduce the group experience.**—Thank the children for bringing toys to share with girls and boys who do not have toys. Show the children the toys they wrapped in the homeliving center.

**Read Bible thoughts.**—Place colorful ribbons in the Read-to-Me Bible to mark the references for the unit Bible thoughts. Select volunteers to hold the Bible as you read each Bible thought. Thank the children for specific times when they worked together during activities. Thank them for bringing toys to share. Explain that sharing is a way we can be kind to one another.

**Gather the toys.**—➡ **Prepare Ahead:** Cover a large box with gift wrapping paper.

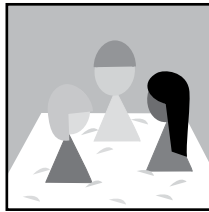
Place the box in the center of the group area. Ask the children to



take turns putting the wrapped toys in the box. After the toys are gathered, talk with the children about the family that will receive them. Listen as the children tell about the toys they brought. Tell them you know the girls and boys who receive the gifts will be happy.

***Conclude the group experience.***—Sing the song “Jesus Was a Child.” Thank God for stories and songs about Jesus. Thank Him for happy times for playing.

## Outdoor Time Activities



### **Playing with Toys**

Give the children opportunities to play with toys like Jesus might have used when He was a child. For example, provide hoops; balls; rattles; and small, wooden toys with wheels. Play a simplified version of the game hopscotch. (Do not expect threes to hop. Instead, show them how to jump from space to space.)

### **Taking Toys Outside**

Invite children who made toys such as kites and wind toys in the art center to take them outside. Be sure each child's toy is labeled with her name so the toys will not get mixed up. Take a box or bag along to collect the toys before going inside.

### **Enjoying Toys with Wheels**

Provide several different types of toys with wheels. Include tricycles, wagons, wheelbarrows, and scooters. Watch as the children enjoy the toys. Comment on how much fun they seem to be having. Encourage the children to take turns with friends. For example, explain to a child that after he pulls the wagon around the circle three times, another friend can have a turn.

### **Being Creative with Boxes**

Provide many cardboard boxes in several sizes. Help the children find a variety of uses for the boxes. Boxes can be used to build, climb in and out of, and make houses for toys. If both ends of the boxes are open, they can be put together to form a tunnel through which children can crawl.

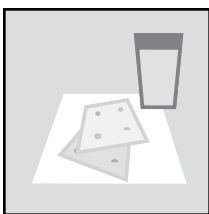
## **Playing with Toys in the Sand**

Provide clean sand and sand toys. Store the sand in large, plastic containers. Cover the containers and bring them inside when they are not in use. This protects the sand from animals and keeps it clean for the children to use.

## **Running, Jumping, and Climbing**

Give the children many opportunities to run, jump, climb, and move about freely. Preschoolers need free time during which they can determine their own activities. Your job is to be sure the activities are safe and productive.

## **Snack Time Activities**



Remember to thank God each day before eating snack. Ask a child or teacher at each table to say a thank-you prayer for friends in her group.

### **Enjoying a Wintertime Snack**

Provide nutritious snacks that will give children energy. During the winter months, children need extra energy just as adults do. Oranges and orange juice are both good sources of energy. Orange juice that has been heated until it is slightly warm is nourishing after playing outside on a cold winter day.

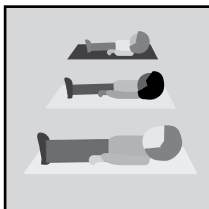
### **Enjoying Teddy Bear Cookies**

Graham cracker cookies in the shape of teddy bears are available at many supermarkets. These cookies are a treat that relates to this unit on toys.

### **Making Gingerbread Men**

Include the children in helping make gingerbread men. Provide packaged gingerbread mix. Instead of using a cutter, let the children roll their own cookies. The cookies probably will not look like gingerbread men, but the children will be proud of them and they will taste just as good.

## Rest Time Activities



### **Resting with a Favorite Toy**

On the day the children bring a favorite toy to school, allow each child to have a favorite toy for rest time. If a child has brought a noisy toy, help him select another favorite toy from toys displayed in the centers. Say: “Resting with a favorite toy is a special treat just for today. You must be extra quiet so the toys can rest.”

### **Settling for Rest Time**

Rub the backs of children who are having trouble settling for rest time. After these children relax, move to the children who are resting quietly and rub their backs, too. Telling a favorite bedtime story also helps children settle. “The Three Bears” is a suitable story to tell during this unit.

### **Having a Silent Rest Time**

Sometimes a little change in routine helps children rest better, especially when they have had an exciting morning. If you usually play quiet music during rest time, try having a silent rest time instead.

### **Putting Away Towels**

After rest time show the children how to fold or roll their towels neatly. Sometimes a three-year-old finds it easier to fold a towel in half lengthwise and then roll it up. While folding is a hard task for threes, it is one they can master with everyday practice.

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.....**Unit Evaluation**.....

- Did the children have opportunities to talk about their favorite toys?
- Do the children understand that some toys are handmade while others are bought at a store?
- Are the children more aware of toys with which Jesus might have played?
- Were children given many opportunities to take turns?
- Did children begin to understand that God wants us to show kindness to others?
- Did the children enjoy the activities relating to toys?
- Which activities will you change when you teach the unit again?



# Resources

## Block Accessories

Handmade toy vehicles (local craft person)

Wooden toy vehicles (Constructive Playthings)

## Books

Read-to-Me Bible (Holman)\*

*Alphabears: An ABC Book*, Hague (H. Holt)

*Baby Bop's Toys*, Kearns and O'Brien (Lyon's Group)

*Baby Says*, Steptoe (Mulberry)

*Beady Bear*, Freeman (Viking)

*Carl Goes Shopping*, Day (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux)

*Carl Goes to Daycare*, Day (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux)

*Corduroy*, Freeman (Viking)

*Corduroy Goes to the Doctor*, Freeman (Viking)

*Corduroy's Busy Street*, Freeman (Viking)

*Corduroy's Christmas*, Freeman (Viking)

*Friends in the Park*, Bunnett (Checkerboard)

*Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, Brett (Sandcastle)

*Good Dog, Carl*, Day (Simon and Schuster)

*I Play in My Room*, Rockwell and Rockwell (Simon and Schuster)

*Jesus Grew*, Willis (Abingdon)

*The Line Up Book*, Russo (Puffin)

*My Doll, Keshia*, Greenfield (Writers and Readers)

*Numbears: A Counting Book*, Hague (H. Holt)

*A Pocket for Corduroy*, Freeman (Viking)

*Ten Bears in a Bed*, Richardson (Hyperion)

*The Three Bears*, Galdone (Clarion)

*Where's My Teddy?* Alborough (Candlewick)

"My Books About . . ." series (Convention)\*

## Music

### Cassettes

*Modern Tunes for Rhythms and Instruments*, Palmer (Educational Activities)

*Pretend*, Palmer (Educational Activities)  
"Rag Doll"

### Songbooks

*Go In and Out the Window*, Fox (H. Holt)

"Did You Ever See a Lassie?"

*I Like to Sing About Jesus*, Billingsley and Jackson (Genevox)\*\*

"Jesus Was a Child"

*Music for Today's Children*, Butler, Kirkland, Leach, and Adams (Genevox)\*\*

"I Am Happy"

"I Like the Things You Do"

"It's Fun to Be Together"

## Pictures

*WEE Learn Teaching Pictures for Three-Year-Olds* (Convention)\*

"My Favorite Toy," Picture 16

"Reading a Bedtime Story," Picture 42

"When Jesus Was a Child," Picture 15

## Puzzles and Manipulatives

"Balloon Colors" (The Puzzle People) PPI16 [8 pieces]

"Blocks" (Lauri) LR-2805 [7 pieces]

"Chunky Truck" (Lauri) LR-2824 [4 pieces]

"Easy Shapes and Colors" (Judy/Instructo) J120008 [4 pieces]

"Many Lengths Crayons" (The Puzzle People) PPI25 [6 pieces]

"Our Toys" Ravensburger Didacta Puzzle (Kentucky School Service) INP-RB06029 [10 pieces]

"Teddy Bear" (Lauri) LR-2801 [7 pieces]

Battat Simplex Playboard Puzzle (Southern School Supply) BAT SX1354 [5 pieces] (untitled puzzle that depicts toys)

Bolt 'N Play (Constructive Playthings)

Rainbow Blocks (Constructive Playthings)

Tinkertoy (Southern School Supply)

## Videos

"Madeline and the Toy Factory" (Troll Learn and Play)

VM056 [based on Ludwig Bemelmans' Madeline adventures, narration by Christopher Plummer]

## Miscellaneous

Bucket balance (Constructive Playthings)

Checkers and checkerboard

Pottery clay (school supply store)

Toddler Rhythm Band Instruments (Constructive Playthings)

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\*These resources are available by calling 1-800-458-2772.

\*\*This resource is out of print. If you cannot locate the song suggested, substitute a song appropriate to the activity or make up words to a familiar tune.

# UNIT 8

## I Have Favorite Toys

Parent Communications

Dear Parents,

The children have had a fun time at school telling friends about their favorite toys. Thank you for helping your child select a toy to bring to school.

Toys have a strong influence on a child's development. Helping your child learn to make wise choices at an early age is important. When buying toys for your child, consider the following:

- How many ways can the child use the toy? Legos, Tinkertoys, and building blocks can be used to build many types of structures. Children will use them day after day without losing interest.
- Is the toy age appropriate? For example, teenage-type dolls are inappropriate for three-year-olds. Baby dolls, on the other hand, are toys that grow with the child throughout the preschool years.
- Does the toy stimulate creativity? While coloring books stifle creativity, crayons, paper, scissors, pencils, and paint encourage creativity.
- Is the toy safe? Be alert for sharp edges; paint that chips; and small, removable pieces.
- Will your child be interested in and enjoy the toy? Toys are intended to be fun!

Thank you once again for the support you continue to give your child and our preschool program. Please contact us if you have questions about your child's school activities.

Sincerely,

Your Child's Teacher

# Home Activity

Toys do not have to be store bought to be fun. Boxes provide endless hours of enjoyment for young children. A large box from an appliance store can become a play house, a puppet stage, or a spacecraft. Plan time to help your child build a toy from a big box.

