

# The Gingerbread Man

## This experience creates opportunities to:

- Hear and copy repeated refrains (run, run as fast as you can) (receptive & expressive communication)
- Discuss how each of the animals is hungry, what we feel like when hungry and what foods we like to eat (receptive & expressive communication, awareness of self)
- Explore what each animal may eat in real life (exploratory skills, life skills)
- Engage in repeated baking activities (gingerbread), with visual prompts, scaffolding learning and encouraging independence (receptive communication, problem solving)
- Engage in movement in a way that is comfortable, first going 'fast' then going 'slow' (mobility, interaction)
- Explore sense of smell, discovering likes and dislikes (awareness of self)
- Recreate story aspects through role play (Play skills, expressive communication, mobility, life skills, social skills)
- Build upon experiences they may have had previously, particularly over the festive period (life skills, expressive communication, problem solving)
- Engage with another taking it in turns to chase and catch (mobility, interaction, social skills)

## Potential resources:

- Gingerbread Man book
- Puppets, story spoons or character props
- Animals - cat, dog, cockerel, cow, pig, horse, fox
- Blue fabric (river)
- Sensory sock - gingerbread scent and other scents
- Gingerbread baking ingredients & photo recipe/step by step guide
- Gross motor dice - running 'fast' or 'slow'
- Chef hat, apron, mixing bowl, wooden spoon

## New vocabulary:

Fast	Animal names
Catch	Gingerbread
Run	Smell
Slow	Taste
Bake	
Cook	



# Little Red Riding Hood

## This experience creates opportunities to:

- Explore facial expressions and body parts (eyes, teeth, ears) (awareness of self)
- Engage in a narrative and take on a role (receptive & expressive communication, social skills)
- Investigate the colour 'red' (exploratory skills, receptive communication)
- Connect experiences and develop understanding of how we are feeling and how we may feel when poorly (receptive & expressive communication, awareness of self)
- Repeat the story or create own stories using sensory trays and small world resources, make own decisions and choose how to engage with resources (play skills, problem solving, expressive communication)

## Potential resources:

- Little Red Riding Hood book
- Story spoons
- Red cloak (fabric)
- Glasses & hat for Granny
- Wolf ears
- Basket
- Red sensory tray - red feathers, red large pom poms, pots & scoops, weighing scales, small baskets/containers
- Forest sensory tray - leaves & twigs, basket, house & story characters
- Mirrors - looking at our own teeth, eyes and ears

## New vocabulary:

- |              |        |
|--------------|--------|
| Ears         | Rescue |
| Eyes         | House  |
| Teeth        | Cloak  |
| Hear         | Red    |
| See          |        |
| Eat          |        |
| Wolf         |        |
| Basket       |        |
| Woods/forest |        |



# The Very Hungry Caterpillar

## This experience creates opportunities to:

- Explore different fruits and discover individual likes/dislikes (awareness of self, expressive communication)
- Care for living things and the environment, watch caterpillars grow and turn into butterflies (life skills, exploratory skills)
- Introduce life cycles and what this means (receptive communication, exploratory skills)
- Share & develop awareness of days of the week (receptive communication)
- Explore outdoor environments, gardens & community areas to search for emerging caterpillars using magnifying glasses (exploratory skills, mobility)
- Create 'posting' activities where the caterpillar eats different foods, encouraging labelling (verbally or with sign/visual aids) of foods and developing vocabulary (receptive & expressive communication, interaction)
- Begin to explore symmetry, what this means and looks like (sensory, problem solving, receptive & expressive communication)
- Explore the language of size and draw comparisons between big and small objects (problem solving)
- Explore counting and sorting of different objects (problem solving, exploratory skills)

## Potential resources:

- The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
- Story bag - caterpillar & food props
- Real life fruits - fruit kebabs/fruit salad making
- Makaton signs & visual prompts
- Caterpillar to Butterfly lifecycle book
- Grow your own caterpillars to butterflies (Insect Lore)
- Red and green pom poms
- Wooden fruit
- Fruit threading strings

## New vocabulary:

Caterpillar	Monday
Butterfly	Tuesday
Munch	Wednesday
Leaf	Thursday
Ate	Friday
Small	Saturday
Big	Sunday
Enormous	Hungry



Enhanced Stories

## What does your snowflake look like?

### This experience creates opportunities to:

- Enhance fine motor skills through cutting and decorating (mobility, sensory, exploratory skills, play skills, expressive communication)
- Promotes creativity, and an understanding of patterns in nature (exploratory skills, play skills, problem solving)
- Explore the science in simple terms, using visuals
- Create snowflakes (exploratory skills, expressive communication, play skills)

### Potential resources:

- White paper
- Scissors
- Crayons, pens, pencils
- Glitter, sequins
- Glue
- Pom poms, buttons (white, silver, blue, purple)
- Lollipop sticks, paper straws
- Cotton buds, cotton wool balls
- Tissue paper
- Photographs of snowflakes under a microscope

### New vocabulary:

Snowflake	Ice
Cutting	Cold
Scissors	White
Paper	Fall
Glitter	Drip
Patterns	Stick
Sparkle	



Loose Parts

## Mud Kitchen

### This experience creates opportunities to:

- Provide a rich sensory experience through textures, smells and sights of natural materials such as mud, water, leaves and sticks (play skills, exploratory skills, sensory)
- Use children's fine and gross motor skills, the physical actions involved in scooping, stirring, pouring and mixing mud (sensory, play skills, exploratory play, mobility)
- Develop open ended imaginative play (sensory, play skills, expressive communication)
- Provide environmental texts e.g. cafe menus and encourage children to mark-make on boards creating their own 'menu' or taking orders (receptive and expressive communication)

### Potential resources:

- Mud kitchen
- Utensils and tools such as mixing bowls various sizes, wooden spoons and spatulas, pots, pans and baking trays, measuring cups and spoons, sieves and colanders, funnels
- Soil or compost
- Water supply
- Sticks, leaves, pinecones, flowers
- Natural food colouring or spices
- Small chalk board or white board

### New vocabulary:

Mud  
Scooping  
Mixing  
Pouring  
Labelling tools used



Loose Parts

## Recyclable Materials

### This experience creates opportunities to:

- Provide exploration of different materials (play skills, exploratory skills, sensory)
- Explore recyclable materials in own way (play skills, exploratory play, sensory)
- Promote creativity and transforms boxes into different role play experiences that are of interest to children (play skills, exploratory skills, sensory, social, mobility)
- Use junk modelling to encourage creative thinking and problem solving (play skills, social interaction, mobility, exploratory skills)

### Potential resources:

- Basic recyclable materials such as boxes of various sizes, cardboard tubes, egg cartons, plastic materials such as bottles, yoghurt pots
- Paper, scrap paper, newspaper, bubble wrap, glue
- Painting and colouring resources
- Dry pasta, pebbles, buttons for making noise changes
- Storage baskets/boxes
- Tape
- Somebody Swallowed Stanley by Sarah Roberts
- Somebody Crunched Colin by Sarah Roberts

### New vocabulary:

Recycle  
Plastic  
Build  
Tower  
Reuse  
Tubes  
Box  
Knock down  
Ready, steady, go



Loose Parts

# If Picasso Painted a Snowman

## This experience creates opportunities to:

- Create different marks & movements on a variety of surfaces (paper, outdoor pavements, horizontal & vertical surfaces) (mobility, sensory, exploratory skills, expressive communication)
- Make independent decisions & choices about how to paint & create marks & movements (sense of self)
- Develop creative thinking (sense of self)
- Explore different textures & movements with whole body (mobility, exploratory skills, mobility)
- Use a variety of tools to encourage different ways of painting e.g. sticks, feathers, mops, wheels (exploratory skills)
- Discuss different artists (throughout the story) and experiment with painting in their style (receptive & expressive communication, exploratory skills)
- Explore different artwork, using photographs & sensory trays (sensory, exploratory skills)

## Potential resources:

- If Picasso Painted a Snowman by Amy Newbold
- Card, paper (small and large)
- Paints and brushes, watercolours
- Pencils, crayons, pens
- Clay
- Photographs or real-life art
- Natural materials - sticks, leaves, long grass
- Vertical painting opportunities (walls, trees, washing lines)
- Sensory tray materials - coloured rice, stars, paintbrushes for dry mark-making

## New vocabulary:

- |            |        |
|------------|--------|
| Snowman    | Melty  |
| Picasso    | Dot    |
| Paint      | Square |
| Same       | Circle |
| Different  | Rhythm |
| Patchwork  | Swirl  |
| Ornamental | Twirl  |
| Splish     |        |
| Splash     |        |
| Splat      |        |



# Granny's Easter Eggs Are Not the Sort You Eat

## This experience creates opportunities to:

- Explore the world around us making connections with our experiences (exploratory skills, expressive communication)
- Develop awareness of snakes and reptiles - natural habitat, diet and nests (receptive & expressive communication, exploratory skills)
- Discuss what kinds of animals lay eggs (not in the story) e.g. turtles, birds, explore what their lives look like (receptive & expressive communication, exploratory skills)
- Explore dinosaurs, egg laying, types of dinosaurs, sizes of their eggs (receptive & expressive communication, exploratory skills, play skills)
- Mark-make with hard boiled eggs (rolling through paint) observing lines and patterns (expressive communication, mobility, sensory)
- Engage in egg rolling! Decorate individual eggs then use ramps of different sizes & heights, 'ready, steady, go' and measure which egg travels the furthest (expressive communication, sensory, physical, problem solving)
- Provide the sensory experience of manipulating clay, making individual clay eggs, exploring texture (squashing, squeezing, feeling). What kind of egg can you make? (expressive communication, sensory)

## Potential resources:

- Granny's Easter Eggs Are Not the Sort You Eat by Becci Murray
- Mixed creative materials - paint, glue
- Garden/community outing - search for eggs
- Sticks, straws and natural materials
- Non-fiction books - reptiles, snakes, turtles, birds, alligators, dinosaurs
- Small world set ups to include eggs, animals & natural habitat
- Different real-life eggs (size, colour)
- Clay

## New vocabulary:

Treats	Stegosaurus
Egg	Rabbit
Lizard	Smack
Nibble	Thud
Tortoise	Boing
Chomped	Slam
Alligator	Zing
Foil	Zap
Ostrich	Boom
Dinosaur	



Creative



## Henri's Scissors

### This experience creates opportunities to:

- Practice cutting with a variety of scissors and develop fine motor skills (physical expressive communication, problem solving)
- Realise that tools can be used for a purpose (receptive communication, awareness of self)
- Encourage life skills that can be transferred across experiences e.g. cutting paper, cutting playdough (life skills, play skills, exploratory skills)
- Paint paper in a variety of colours exploring colour names and colour mixing (expressive communication, sensory)
- Make snips into paper (mobility, play skills)
- Cut-out a variety of different shapes, in different sizes (mobility, expressive communication, exploratory skills)
- Make simple arrangements with shapes and patterns (expressive communication, problem solving)

### Potential resources:

- Henri's Scissors by Jeanette Winter
- A variety of scissors - left & right-handed, adapted, playdough
- Paper, card, foam, felt
- Natural resources - fresh herbs, leaves, grass
- Sellotape
- Long poles
- Chalks
- Glue

### New vocabulary:

Scissors  
Cut  
Snip  
Painting  
Artist  
Drawing  
Instrument  
Paper  
Shapes



Creative

## Gingerbread Playdough

### This experience creates opportunities to:

- Explore sensory engagement of smell (aroma of spices), touch (knead, roll and shape), sight - rich brown colour (play skills, exploratory skills, sensory, social awareness skills)
- To use fine motor skills to make and knead dough (mobility, sensory)
- To independently select tools & cutters that create gingerbread in chosen shapes (awareness of self, mobility, expressive communication)
- Develop imaginative skills by "cooking" gingerbread playdough (play skills, real life skills, expressive communication)

### Potential resources:

- Flour, water, salt, oil, cream of tartar
- Ground ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg and brown food colouring
- Rolling pins, cookie cutters, plastic knives or dough tools

### New vocabulary:

Brown  
Playdough  
Roll  
Squeeze  
Smell  
Touch  
Ginger

**CAUTION - raw flour can pose a health risk to young and vulnerable children. Raw flour should not be explored by children under 2, and children over 2 must be supervised when using raw flour. You must be mindful of children with compromised immune systems within your centre and may choose to heat treat flour before allowing children to engage with it to minimise any health-related risk. Be conscious of allergies within your centre, any children with a gluten intolerance or coeliac disease will require cornflour as an alternative to wheat flour.**



Playdough

## Introducing Tools

### This experience creates opportunities to:

- Enhance the play experience of using tools (exploratory skills, play skills, sensory, mobility)
- Create different shapes and textures (sensory, mobility, exploratory skills, awareness of self)
- Problem solving, finding out how to effectively use each tool (exploratory skills, play skills, expressive communication, awareness of self)
- Develop fine motor skills and hand strength (mobility, play skills)

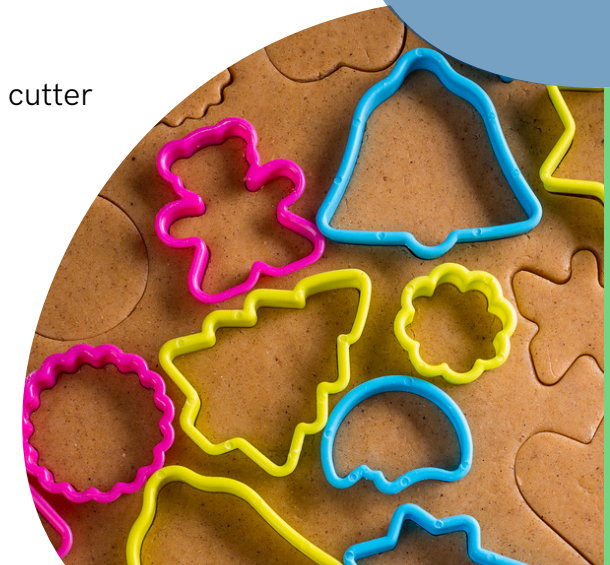
### Potential resources:

- Large and small rolling pins
- Cutters
- Play mats and baking mats
- Dough tools
- Child safe knives
- Patterned rollers, cork stampers (glue objects onto the ends of corks to make imprints)

### New vocabulary:

- Playdough
- Roll
- Squeeze
- Labelling tools e.g. rolling pin, cookie cutter

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Playdough

## Daffodil Playdough

This experience creates opportunities to:

- Discuss & observe daffodils in play, then notice them in our natural environment (receptive communication, expressive communication, life skills)
- Explore senses whilst engaging with playdough e.g. floral smell (sensory, play skills, social skills)
- Create shapes with purpose (mobility, play skills, expressive communication)

Potential resources:

- Flour, water, salt, oil, cream of tartar
- Daffodils, real and artificial
- Large and small rolling pins
- Food colouring
- Child safe knives
- Photographs of daffodils
- Green pipe cleaners

New vocabulary:

Playdough	Scent
Roll	Yellow
Squeeze	Orange
Daffodils	Green
Flower	Stretch
Floral	

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Playdough

## Parachute Play

### This experience creates opportunities to:

- Encourage cooperation and working together to move and manipulate the parachute (social skills, interaction)
- Promote non-competitive play, turn-taking and sharing (social skills, interaction)
- Develop a sense of rhythm (mobility, awareness of self)
- Listen and follow instruction e.g. shake and stop (receptive communication, interaction)
- Promote social interaction (social skills, interaction)
- Enhance language development – adding songs to parachute play e.g. 3 cheeky monkeys bouncing on the bed. (receptive & expressive communication, interaction)
- Develop fine and gross motor skills in children’s hands, forearms, upper arms and shoulders (mobility)
- Develop children’s perceptual skills (eye coordination, hand-eye coordination, visual and auditory senses/skills) (mobility, sensory)
- Express and share feelings with one another – parachute games are a time to have fun and share joy! (expressive communication, awareness of self)

### Potential resources:

- Parachute
- Bean bags
- Balls
- Monkey toys
- Songs & rhymes
- Music/CDs
- The Little Book of Parachute Play by Clare Beswick

### New vocabulary:

- Shake
- Stop
- Lift
- Fall down
- Wave
- Bouncing



## Body Awareness Action Songs

This experience creates opportunities to:

- Listen to instructions in action songs e.g. shake your bean bag (receptive communication, mobility)
- Move our bodies in a variety of ways, that is comfortable for each person, developing gross motor skills (expressive communication, sensory, mobility)
- Engage in action songs as part of a group with peers and adults. Encourage working together and developing cooperation (physical, mobility, social skills, interaction)
- Listen to and develop children's vocabulary. Singing along to action songs and modelling new words (receptive and expressive communication)
- Develop children's memory and recall (receptive communication, physical, problem solving)
- Share and encourage a love of music, so children can make decisions about their own likes/dislikes and favourite songs & rhymes (physical, expressive communication, awareness of self)
- Boost children's self-confidence and self-awareness (expressive communication, awareness of self)

### Potential resources:

- Action songs and rhymes - Grand Old Duke of York, Heads, Shoulders, Knees & Toes
- Song cube/dice,
- Tap sticks
- Bean bags
- Pom poms
- Ribbon twirlers, hoops

### New vocabulary:

- |       |       |
|-------|-------|
| Shake | Open  |
| Stop  | Close |
| Fast  | Up    |
| Slow  | Down  |
| High  | Left  |
| Low   | Right |
| Tap   |       |



# Can You Build a Bridge?

## This experience creates opportunities to:

- Explore photographs of real bridges, looking at their shapes, heights and patterns (receptive communication, exploratory skills, problem solving)
- Reflect on our experiences - who has been across a real-life bridge? How did we feel when crossing? How high was it? How did you feel? Perhaps we have been under a bridge in the car, or through a bridge/tunnel on a train (expressive communication, life skills, interaction)
- Use a variety of different shapes and sizes of blocks to create your own bridge e.g. Lego bridges (expressive communication, mobility, problem solving)
- Experiment with different resources to build the strongest bridge and test them with small world resources and objects to see if they can hold the weight (social skills, problem solving, interaction)
- Add narratives to bridges by sharing books together that involve bridges and discuss the different types of bridges (expressive communication, interaction)
- Include mark-making opportunities by adding clipboards and pencils to block play and drawing/designing your bridge before building (expressive communication, mobility)
- Build a giant bridge with planks of wood, crates and large loose parts - big enough for everyone to move across - see who can balance and make their way across the bridge! (mobility, social skills, interaction)
- Explore prepositions together - place objects on top, under, behind, next to your bridge (problem solving, receptive & expressive communication)

## Potential resources:

- Blocks - different shapes, sizes and colours
- Cardboard, and boxes
- Natural resources
- Lego or Duplo blocks, planks of wood, books on bridges, cardboard, paper, small world people, small cars, tape, drawing paper, crayons or markers, natural materials, crates

## New vocabulary:

Bridge	Over the bridge
Strong	People
Car	Walking
Build	Under
Structure	In front
Design	Behind
Too heavy	On top
Test	Middle



Block Play

## Building a Bug Hotel

### This experience creates opportunities to:

- Discuss different bugs & what they may need to be happy and safe in their bug hotel (receptive & expressive communication, life skills)
- Look at photographs of bug hotels. Discuss what children may have seen before, draw and make plans (expressive communication, interaction)
- Go on a hunt together (either in the garden or community) to find resources to fill a bug hotel e.g. sticks, broken bricks, small terracotta pots. Create a list with photographs (interaction, social skills, mobility)
- Develop interaction and social skills with each other by building a bug hotel together as part of a group (interaction, social skills, mobility)
- Use real-life tools to make a bug hotel (receptive communication, mobility, life skills)
- Observe the bug hotel in action, with magnifying glasses, clipboards and pencils – discuss what bugs are visiting, draw different bugs (expressive communication, exploratory skills, interaction)
- Extend children’s experiences by ‘deep diving’ into different bugs they notice – what do they eat? Create their own bugs (painting, modelling), read stories & non-fiction texts about different bugs. Create sensory trays for each of the bugs (receptive & expressive communication, mobility, exploratory skills, sensory)

### Potential resources:

- Wood, screws, nails, hammer, screwdriver
- Bricks, terracotta pots, sticks, straw, bamboo tubes, log rounds, pebbles/stones
- Recycled plastic bottles (if making individual bug houses)
- Clipboards, paper, pencils
- Magnifying glasses, bug pots
- Minibeast small world toys
- Non-fiction bug books
- Nursery rhymes & songs e.g. incy wincy spider

### New vocabulary:

- |                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Wood           | Woodlouse |
| Brick          | Ladybird  |
| Pallet         | Spider    |
| Pipe           | Worm      |
| Terracotta pot | Bark      |
| Bug            | Tubes     |
| Insect         |           |
| Beetle         |           |





## A Home for Animals

### This experience creates opportunities to:

- Use blocks and building resources with a purpose in mind (expressive communication, awareness of self)
- Explore and develop own ideas how to create enclosures and fencing (expressive communication, awareness of self, exploratory skills)
- Add storylines to building arrangements e.g. animal rescue or down on the farm (expressive communication, interaction)
- Add small world animals to enclosures to develop story telling (expressive communication, interaction)
- Look at real-life enclosures & buildings on the farm e.g. sheep pens, chicken coops and pig sties. Explore where animals live on the farm (receptive communication, exploratory skills, interaction)
- Explore animal enclosures at the zoo - what this looks like and compare to natural habitats (receptive & expressive communication, exploratory skills)
- Recall past experiences and share these with each other (who has visited the zoo?) Encourage families to share photographs (expressive communication, interaction)
- Create sensory experiences to engage with scenarios in different ways e.g. create an enclosure with wooden blocks & lollipop sticks, then add pigs and straw (exploratory, mobility, sensory)

### Potential resources:

- Big Outdoors for Little Explorers: Farm by Anne-Kathrin Behl
- Non-fiction books about farm animals
- Zoo Sounds by Sam Taplin
- Peep Inside the Zoo by Anna Milbourne
- Cubes, cuboids, cylinders, variety of blocks
- Lollipop sticks, string, flat planks of wood
- Log rounds, sticks
- Tubes, cardboard tubes, straws
- Variety of animals, tractors

### New vocabulary:

Fence  
Pen  
Enclosure  
Stile  
Coop  
Post  
Tie  
Construct



Block Play