

Build It Up, Knock It Down



SE09 Playing With Toys

Primary Objective: 2
Establishes and sustains
positive relationships
c. Interacts with peers

Related Objectives: 1a, 1b, 5, 6, 7a, 8b, 11b, 11c

What You Do

Background: Building with blocks provides children with the opportunity to use problem-solving skills, practice persistence, and learn cause and effect. Block building also gives children a chance to interact with others as they begin to engage each other in their play.

Materials: large foam or cardboard blocks; large indoor area

1. Set up this activity in a large area of the room where children can easily build with blocks and move around each other. Introduce the blocks to the children. Allow the children to touch and explore the blocks.

2. Model building a tower. Let your tower fall down. Model problem solving by talking about different ways you can build the tower so that it will not fall down.

“I am going to make a tall tower. Uh oh, it fell down. Maybe I will try laying the blocks on their sides so the tower doesn’t fall down again.”

3. Invite the children to build and knock down towers with you. Talk about how the children are building and what happens when the towers fall down.

“Would you like to build a tower, too? Wow, that is very tall! Are you going to knock it down? Whoa, it fell down!”

Including All Children

- Record several messages onto a child’s communication device with related picture labels, and review them with the child at the beginning of the activity.
- When giving instructions, provide ample opportunity for the children to practice taking turns.**
- When phrasing a question, include answer choices. For example, ask, “Which block would you like to use? The tall one or the short one?”**

Teaching Sequence

RED	Sit with the child so that she can watch as you and other children build a tower with blocks. Talk about what the other children are doing. “Bhrugu is building with the blocks: one, two, three. Oh! He knocked it down!”
RED	As you build a tower with the child, draw her attention to what other children are building. “Okay, here is my block. Now it is your turn to put on a block. Here is your block. Can you put it onto the tower? I see Luca has a tall tower, too.”
ORANGE	
ORANGE	Observe the child as she builds and knocks down a tower near other children. Encourage her to watch how other children are playing. Comment on what the other children are doing. “Leslie, look at Nikki’s tower. She is making it very tall. Can you make a tall tower, too?”
YELLOW	
YELLOW	As the child builds a tower, encourage him to use strategies that he sees other children implementing to solve any problems with his own tower. “Hmm, your tower keeps falling down. What else can you try to do to make it not fall down? I see that Tina’s tower is very tall. How did she do that?”
GREEN	
GREEN	Encourage the child to join others to build a tower with each child adding a block. “You are all working together to build a tall tower. Who is going to knock it down this time?”

See *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos, Volume 3: Objectives for Development & Learning* for the progression of development beyond the green colored band for this objective and dimension.

Questions to Guide Your Observations

- In what ways did the child interact with others during this experience? (2c)
- How was the child able to grasp and manipulate the blocks? (7a)
- How did the child persist to build a tower with blocks? (11b)

Related LearningGames®

- 50. Nesting Objects

Objective 8

Listens to and understands increasingly complex language

b. Follows directions

Related Objectives: 1b, 1c, 3a, 4, 7a, 11a, 12b, 21a, 23, 30

What You Do

1. Sing to the tune of “Did You Ever See a Lassie?”

Oh, now it's time to clean up.

Let's clean up, let's clean up.

Oh, now it's time to clean up.

Please come and join me.

Oh, let's pick up the [blocks] now,

The [blocks] now, the [blocks] now.

Oh, let's pick up the [blocks] now.

Please come and join me.

2. Repeat using different materials to clean up, e.g., dolls, cars, balls.

- Hold up the item to be picked up as a cue while you sing.
- Replace the phrase “clean up” with “eat lunch” or “eat snack” during the transition to mealtime.

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