

# TODDLERS

## READ

### In English

*Blue* (2018) by Laura Vaccaro Seeger. A heart-warming friendship about a boy and a dog, with lush illustrations in shades of blue.

*Do You See My Tail?* (2017) by Anita Bijsterbosch. A fun toddler guessing game with forest animals; good for a habitat theme.

*Hats Are Not for Cats!* (2019) by Jacqueline Rayner. The household dog is a hat-hoarding tyrant. Delightful rhymes make this a great read-aloud.

*How to Be a Cat* (2019) by Nikki McClure. A kitten masters feline life skills. A lovely storytime book with beautiful black-and-white papercut illustrations.

*Max Attacks* (2019) by Kathi Appelt and Penelope Dullaghan. Max the cat attacks many things, but how many does he actually catch? Gentle rhymes carry the story.

*My Cat Looks Like My Dad* (2019) by Thao Lam. Humorous parallels between a plump furry cat and a mustachioed man. A silly book with broad appeal and interesting collages.

*My Friends* (2005) by Gomi Taro. A little girl lists all the things she has learned from her animal friends.

*Not Norman: A Goldfish Story* (2008) by Kelly Bennett and Noah Z. Jones. A satisfying read-aloud about a pet goldfish. Good for preschoolers as well.

*One-Dog Canoe* (2009) by Mary Casanova and Ard Hoyt. A one-dog canoe becomes an animal-overloaded canoe; lively rhymes, wry humor, and a splash ending.

*One Shoe Two Shoes* (2019) by Caryl Hart and Edward Underwood. Mice hiding in shoes and a curious dog. Joyous rhymes and large-format folk art make this a great storytime choice.

*Pet this Book* (2018) by Jessica Young and Daniel Wiseman. Basic pet care in rhyme.

*Puppy Truck* (2019) by Brian Pinkney. Onomatopoeic lines make this an excellent storytime for puppy and/or truck lovers.

*They All Saw a Cat* (2016) by Brendan Wenzel. Joyous repetition makes this an attention-grabbing book about differences in perspective; 2017 Caldecott winner.

*Where Birdie Lives: A Lift-the-Flap Book* (2019) by Elena Tsvetayeva. A dog hunts for birdie in this interactive storytime mystery for toddlers to solve.

## STORYTIME TIP:

Be sure to leave room for serve-and-return conversations in which you repeat back what toddlers say. Ask yes-or-no questions, or questions with two choices, and give toddlers time to think before responding.

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**Bilingual/Spanish**

*¿De qué tienes miedo, Ratoncito?* (2015) by Susanna Isern and Nora Hilb. Sweet bedtime story about a mouse facing his fears. (Spanish; also available in English)

*El perro con sombrero: A Bilingual Tale* (2015) by Derek Taylor Kent and Jed Henry. A sombrero turns a homeless puppy into a movie star loved by everyone except the cat. (Bilingual)

*Looking for Bongo* (2016) by Eric Velasquez. A sweet mystery for toddlers about a boy in a Black and Latinx family looking for his stuffed Bongo (and asking both house pets and multigenerational family members for help). (English with Spanish words)

*Mamá Goose: Bilingual Lullabies-Nanas* (2019) by Alma Flor Ada, F. Isabel Campoy, and Maribel Saurez. Board book with favorite lullabies from all over the Spanish-speaking world, with English translations. Great in either or both languages. (Bilingual)

**SING****Fingerplay: I Had a Little Turtle (Version 1)**

To the tune of “Tiny Tim.”

I had a little turtle	(close fist with thumb sticking out)
He lived in a box	(make box shape with hands)
He swam in the water	(swimming motions)
He climbed on the rocks.	(climb fingers of one hand over other fist)
He snapped at a mosquito	(snapping motion for each)
He snapped at a flea	
He snapped at a minnow	
And he snapped at me.	
He caught that mosquito	(reach out and pretend to catch each)
He caught that flea	
He caught that minnow	
But he didn't catch me!	(smile and shake head)

**Fingerplay: I Had a Little Turtle (Version 2)**

See video from Jbrary here: <https://bit.ly/2xTTuWu>

I had a little turtle	(bounce fist with thumb up, cover with opposite hand)
His name is Tiny Tim	
I put him in the bathtub	(turtle jumps down)
To see if he could swim.	(swimming motions, both hands)
He drank up all the water	
Glub-glub-glub-glub-glub	(cup hand and pretend to drink)

**STORYTIME TIP:**

For big groups, sing extra songs before the read-aloud. Toddlers have a hard time concentrating on books if people are still trickling into storytime.

**EARLY LITERACY TIP:**

Toddlers understand more words than they speak, so avoid talking to them exclusively in “baby language” so they can learn to speak well.

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He ate up all the soap (pinch hands at mouth and pretend to eat)  
 And now he's home  
 sick in bed (lean head on hands together)  
 with bubbles in his throat! (pat throat)  
 Bubble, bubble, bubble (spin forearms around each other)  
 Bubble, bubble pop! (clap on "pop!")

### Fingerplay: Here Is the Beehive

Here is the beehive (make a fist)  
 But where are the bees? (shrug shoulders)  
 They're hiding inside where nobody sees (point at fist)  
 Watch them come out of the hive!  
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (raise fingers one at a time)  
 Bzzzz (fly fingers around or tickle)

### Song: A Bird Builds a Nest

Pretend to build a nest with invisible items in beak. Sing to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell."

A bird builds a nest  
 A bird builds a nest  
 With sticks and leaves  
 And string and weeds  
 A bird builds a nest

### Rhyme: Little Mouse, Little Mouse

The basic felt board idea is to hide a mouse behind one of the colored houses. Also makes a good stay-and-play activity. Jbrary has a great roundup of adaptations to keep things interesting: <https://bit.ly/3cyeRvS>

Little mouse, little mouse, are you in the red house?  
 Little mouse, little mouse, are you in the blue house?  
 Little mouse, little mouse, are you in the (any color) house?  
 Repeat.

### Fingerplay: Conejo Mio

Salta mi conejito (two fingers up for bunny's ears)  
 Para tus orejitas (move fingers up and down)  
 Come tu zacatillo (pretend you are eating)  
 Conejo mio (hug yourself)  
 Conejo mio

Tristes estan los campos  
 Desde que tu te fuiste  
 Por eso yo te canto  
 Conejo mio  
 Conejo mio

### English/Spanish

turtle = una tortuga  
 mosquito = un mosquito  
 flea = una pulga  
 beehive = una colmena  
 bird = un pájaro  
 little mouse = un pequeño ratón

### Spanish/English

conejito = little bunny

## TODDLERS

## PLAY / TAKE HOME

**Where Is My Home?**

Set out two empty baskets, each with a picture of a habitat (e.g., farm, zoo, house, aquarium). Toddlers sort animal puppets (or laminated pictures) into the correct basket. For preschoolers, you can have the same activity with more complex habitats and/or animals.

**Doggy, Doggy, Where's Your Bone?**

Children take turns as “Doggy” to stand up front with a bone behind their back. They close their eyes as another child steals the bone, returns to their place in the circle, and hides it behind where they sit. As a group, recite “Doggy, Doggy, Where's Your Bone? Somebody took it from your home. Guess who / It might be you.” Doggy guesses until they find the child who took their bone, then that child becomes the next Doggy. Good with small groups. You can also give a bone silhouette to each child to take home.

Idea here: <https://bit.ly/35Uh3uO>

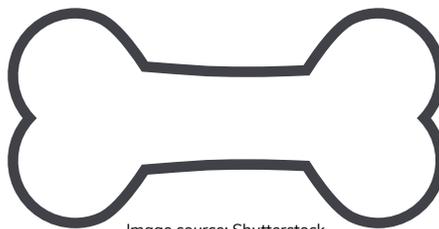


Image source: Shutterstock

**Feather the Bird**

Post a large bird silhouette on a felt board (or tape a craft paper silhouette to a wall). Give each child a brightly colored “feather” and ask them to feather the bird by color. For large groups, call out one color at a time.

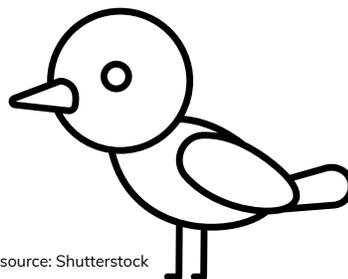
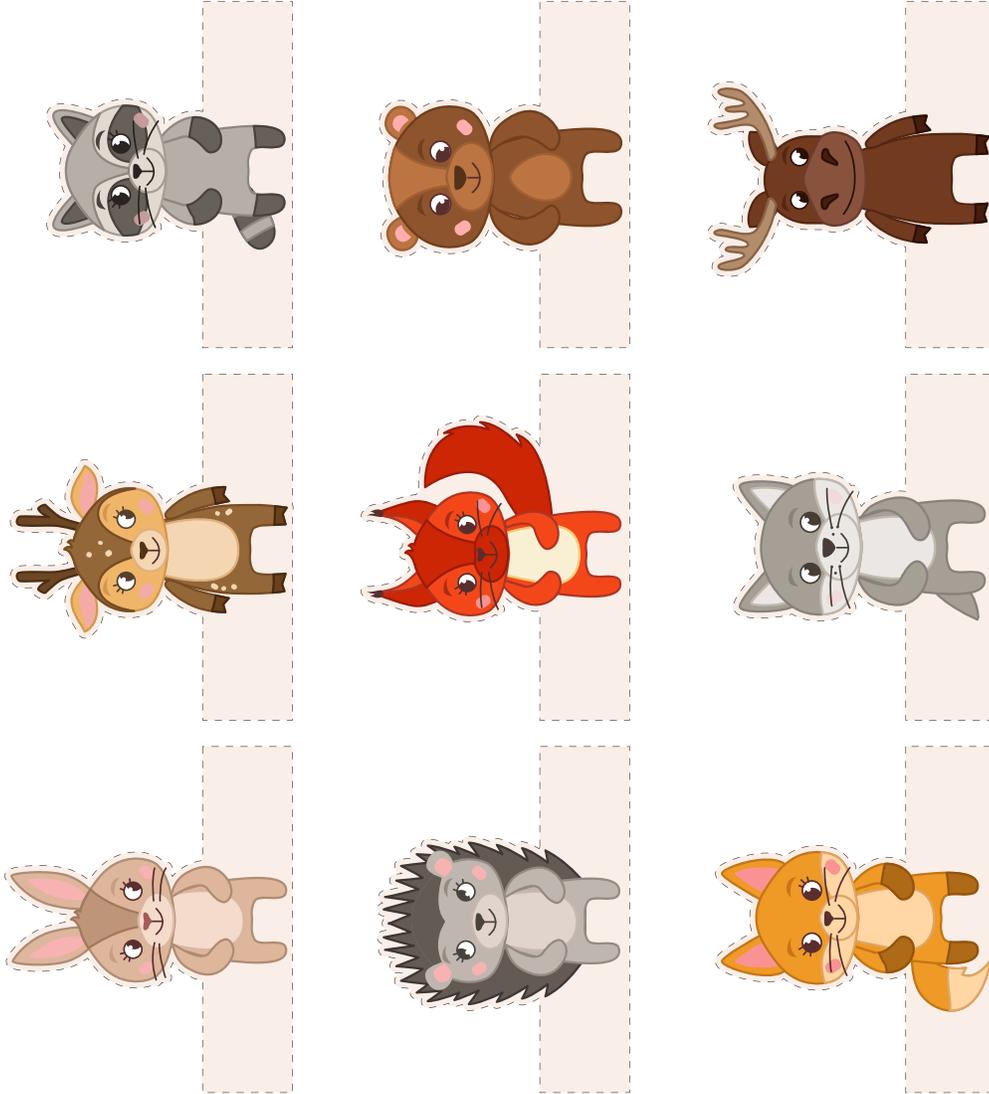


Image source: Shutterstock

**Forest Animal Finger Puppets**

Tape forest animal finger puppets around little fingers, then let toddlers play. Precut the templates or, to modify for preschoolers, let them cut out the finger puppets themselves with safety scissors.

Forest Animal Finger Puppets



**MINI GAMES**

Finger PUPPETS

**FOREST ANIMALS**

1 cut out

2 glue

3 PLAY!