

Activities to Help Children with their Language 1



Props

Use a variety of props such as toys, pictures etc to engage the child's attention in the task.

REMEMBER: Make sure that you don't use too many props as this may become distracting. The amount you use will be dependent on the make up of the group.

Active Rhymes

Make a nursery rhyme box with props such as masks, food, hats etc. While reciting a nursery rhyme, encourage the children to use the props and act out the roles.

REMEMBER: This activity needs to be led by an adult so that the children know which props to use and what actions to do.



Story Walk

Make up a story walk around the room/outside area using pictures or objects depicting each stage of the story. Take the child/ren around the room, finding each card and telling the story.

REMEMBER: Make sure that the children know the story before doing this activity.

Active Short Stories

Share short stories and encourage the children to act them out or repeat repetitive elements. You could also make up actions for the story and encourage the children to join in with them.

REMEMBER: Use the same stories so that the children become familiar with the actions. Some children may be reluctant to participate at first so give them time or consider partners.



Attention & Listening

Shows interest through facial expression and body language.

Hooray/Boo

Show a range of pictures such as going to the park, having a bath, carrots, chocolate etc. Encourage the child/ren to shout 'Hooray' and make a happy face if they like it and 'Boo' with a sad face if they don't.

REMEMBER: This could be extended by using language rather than pictures.

If You're Happy & You Know It

Sing 'If You're Happy/Sad/Angry and You Know It' with the children encouraging them to do appropriate actions for the emotion.

REMEMBER: Practise this regularly with the children.



Mirrors

Ask the children to make different facial expressions in the mirrors. Encourage them to tell each other what facial expression to make.

REMEMBER: Use simple emotions during this task.

Feelings Stories

Read stories involving a variety of different emotions and ask the children to act out the emotion.

REMEMBER: Discuss a wide range of feelings through this activity.



Big Books

Use a selection of big books to develop discussion and activities to encourage understanding of stories.

REMEMBER: Check vocabulary is understood and teach key words that the children find difficult.



Sensory Stories

Select items, related to a simple story, that the children can touch, smell, hear. Allow the children to experience the items as you are telling the story.

REMEMBER: Try to select a variety of objects related to the story and make them as different as possible.

Act It Out

Use role play to retell the story or act it out as it is told. The children act out elements of the story in their own words.

REMEMBER: You will need to choose a very simple story and provide lots of support.



Deconstruct Stories

Deconstruct a story into 'who', 'what', and 'were'. Encourage the children to discuss amongst themselves to come up with the best answer.

REMEMBER: Use simple familiar stories for this task.

Receptive

Shows an understanding of simple concepts such as in/on/under, big/little etc.

Playdoh

Give instructions for the children to carry out using playdoh e.g. "Make a big ball", "make a little snake" etc.

REMEMBER: Use visual cues such as photos to support the children's understanding and give feedback.



PE Games

Give instructions during PE activities, such as "sit under the table", "stand on the bench".

REMEMBER: You may need to use visual cues at first.

Lotto

Make up Lotto boards using photos of children/toys/objects in a variety of places or big/small, coloured items etc. Play the Lotto games with groups of children.

REMEMBER: Go through the pictures with the children first to ensure understanding of the vocabulary.

Small World Play

During Small World Play, give instructions, such as "Put the cup on the table", "Find a big plate" etc.

REMEMBER: Model this activity and use visual cues to support understanding.



Adult Modelling

Give each child and the adult the same set of equipment e.g. building blocks. The adult models creating something and the child/ren copy.

REMEMBER: Carry out this activity on a number of occasions to develop familiarity with objective of the task.

Fuzzy Felts

Encourage the children to copy pictures that you create with the Fuzzy Felts.

REMEMBER: Don't make the pictures too complicated.



Action Songs

Sing action songs such as "If you're happy and you know it". Encourage the child/ren to copy the actions and sing along.

REMEMBER: This needs to be done daily to ensure that the child/ren are familiar with the songs.

Follow the Leader

Play a game of Follow the Leader, encouraging the child/ren to copy your actions.

REMEMBER: Once the child/ren are familiar with this game, you could ask one of them to be the leader.



Symbolic Play

Provide opportunities for symbolic play such as tubs of different size and shape in the water area. Give the child/ren tasks to do with the equipment to encourage symbolic play.

REMEMBER: The adult will need to demonstrate what you can use the equipment for.



Teddy Bears' Picnic

Ask the child/ren to fetch a teddy each and have a teddy bear's picnic. Discuss what they need to create a picnic and make food items out of cardboard etc. for the teddies to eat.

REMEMBER: Allow lots of discussion. This should be done over several days.

Imaginative Play

Make everyday objects into other things e.g. painting wheels on boxes to make cars.

REMEMBER: The adult will need to give a lot of help with this task through modelling and giving ideas.

Create a Story

Tell familiar stories and ask the child/ren to create items and characters from the story.

REMEMBER: These items could then be used for imaginative play in role play or small world areas.



Expressive

Able to communicate needs, wants and choices using words and/or gestures.

Cooking

During snack/cooking activities encourage the child/ren to make choices of what they want to eat/cook.

REMEMBER: You may need to use picture prompts to allow the child to make choices at first.

Craft

During craft activities, provide a wealth of choice and encourage the child to communicate what he wants.

REMEMBER: This activity is adult led and the child should be encouraged to ask rather than take.



Sharing Stories

During story time, encourage the child/ren to interact with the story by questioning them e.g. "what's happening in the picture?"

REMEMBER: Use simple stories with plenty of pictures.

Choice Cards

Introduce a visual timetable and include times where a choice can be made.

Use a question mark or a picture of the child to indicate that they can choose.

REMEMBER: Encourage the child to tell you what they would like to do.



Instructions

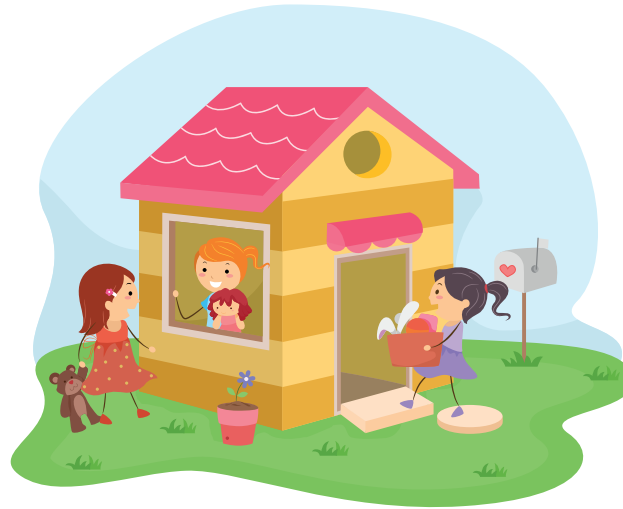
Take photos of the child/ren doing activities e.g. giving dolly a cup of tea. Encourage the child/ren to give each other instructions to match the card.

REMEMBER: This activity will require a lot of adult support.

Shopping

Give the child/ren pictures of items they may find in a shop. Ask them to request items, encouraging them to ask for more than one thing.

REMEMBER: Ensure the child/ren know all of the vocabulary before you begin the task.



Story Maps

Make a story map (Pie Corbett) - see resource file - with the children. Move a teddy along the story map and ask the children to tell you what happens in each part of the story.

REMEMBER: Use a very simple story for this task e.g. morning or bedtime routine.

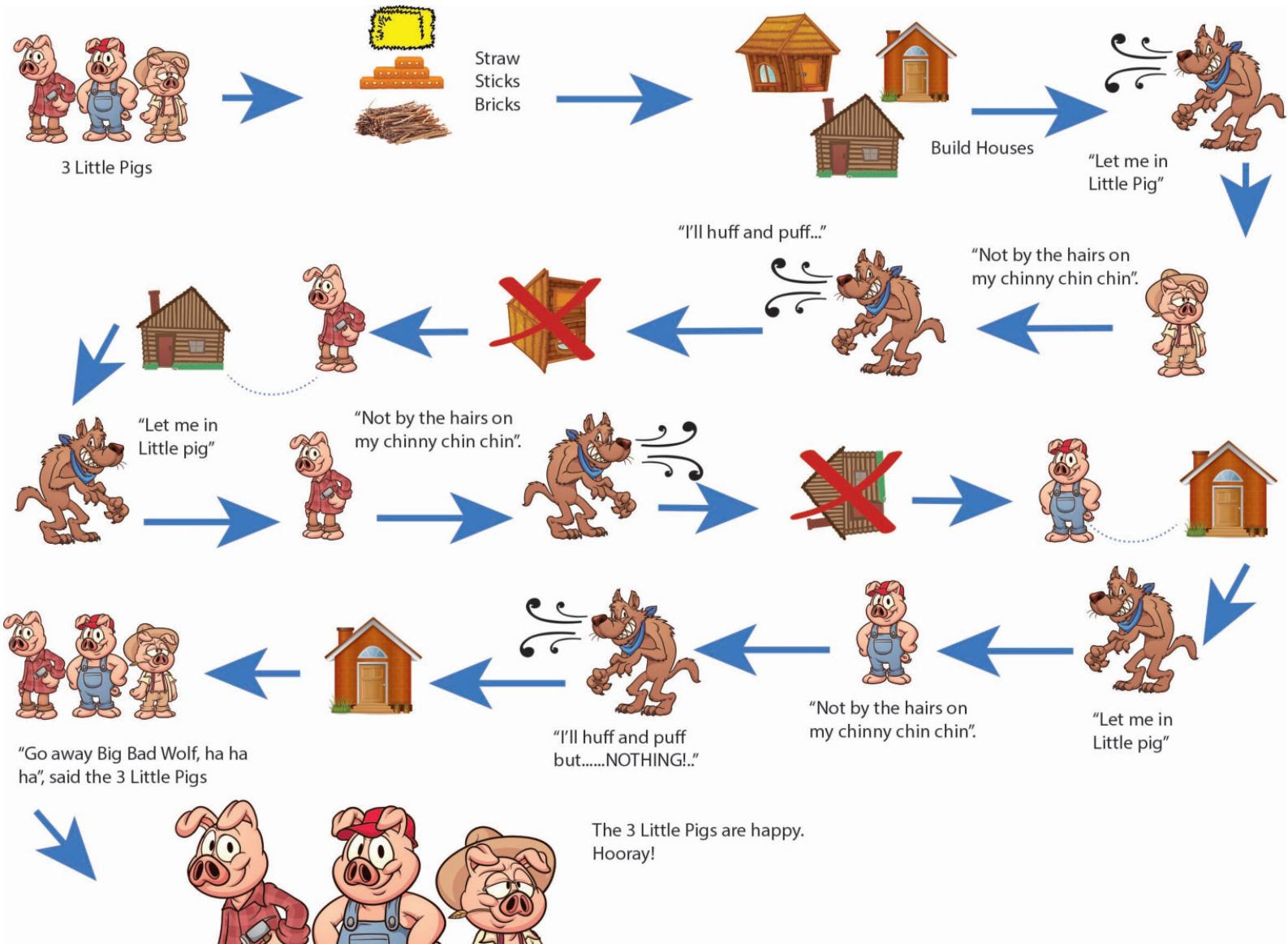
Do What I Say

Take photos of toys in a variety of places e.g. teddy under the table, dolly on the chair. Give the child a different picture. The child tells another group member to place the toy in the position indicated on his card e.g. "Put teddy under the table".

REMEMBER: You may need to prompt to begin with. If the sentence the child produces is not accurate, make sure you model the correct structure.



Story Map Example



Function Lotto

Lotto Board 1

Cut
Cook
Wash
Eat
Pour
Hear

Lotto Board 2

Dry
Write
Drink
Brush Hair
Drive
Play

Lotto Board 3

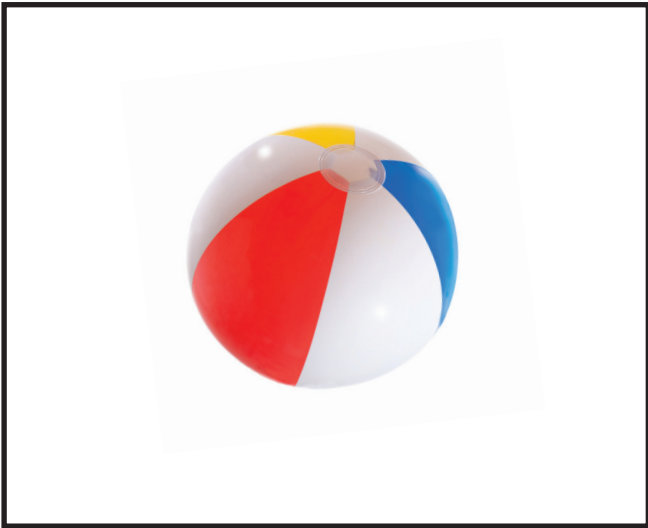
Kick
Sleep
Climb
Ride
Draw
Sweep the floor

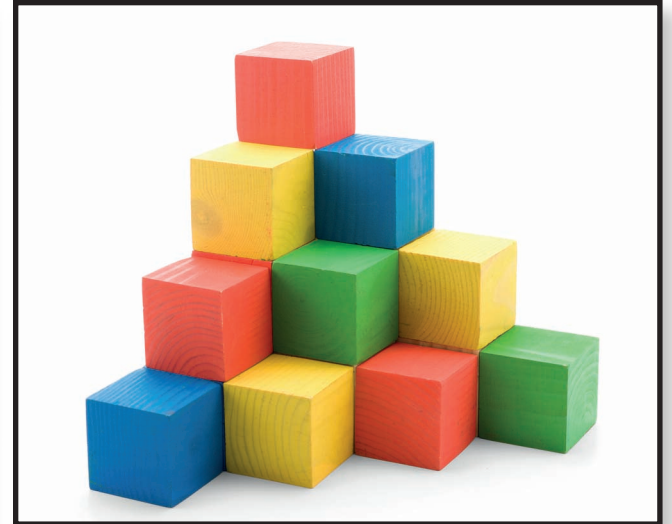
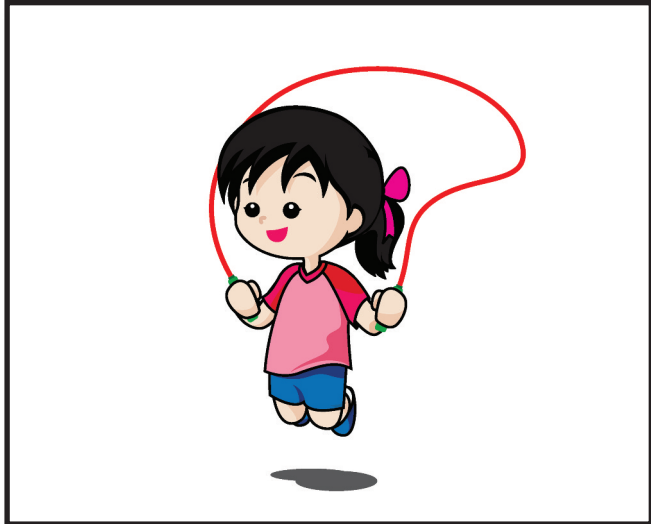
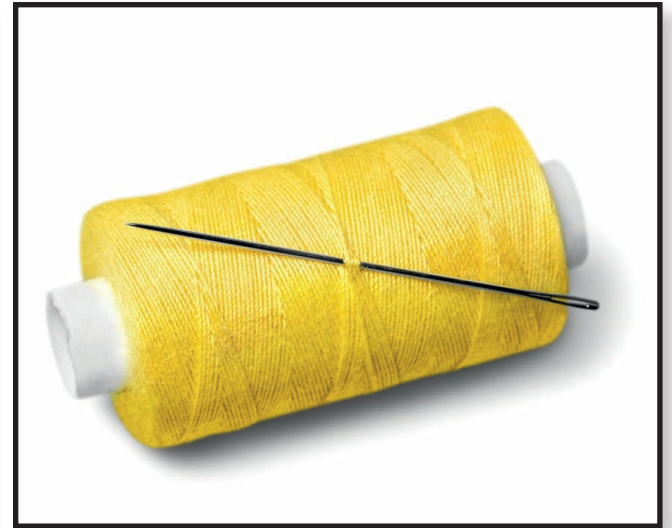
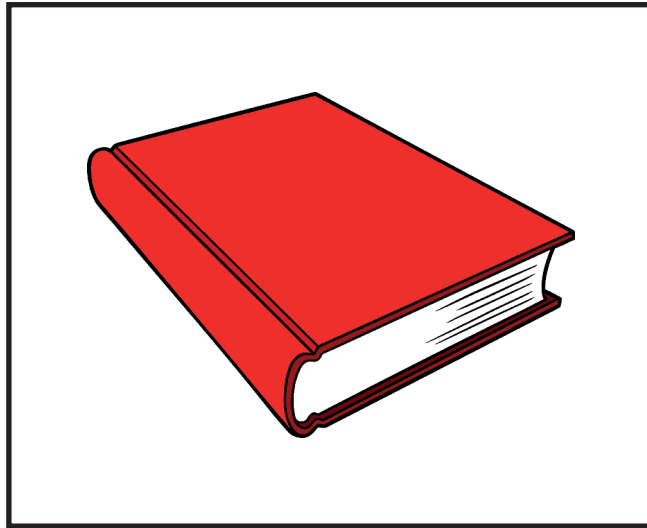
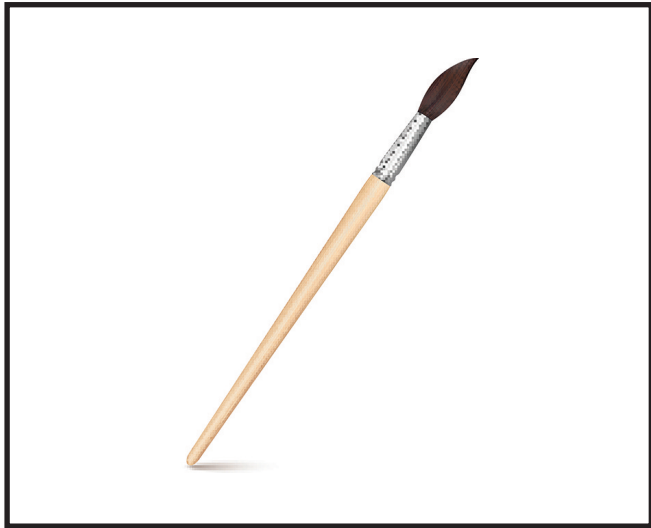
Lotto Board 4

Paint
Read
Sew
Skip
Pay
Build









Concept Lotto

Lotto Board 1

Red ball
Big ball
Stripy ball
Two balls
Bumpy ball
Pink ball

Lotto Board 2

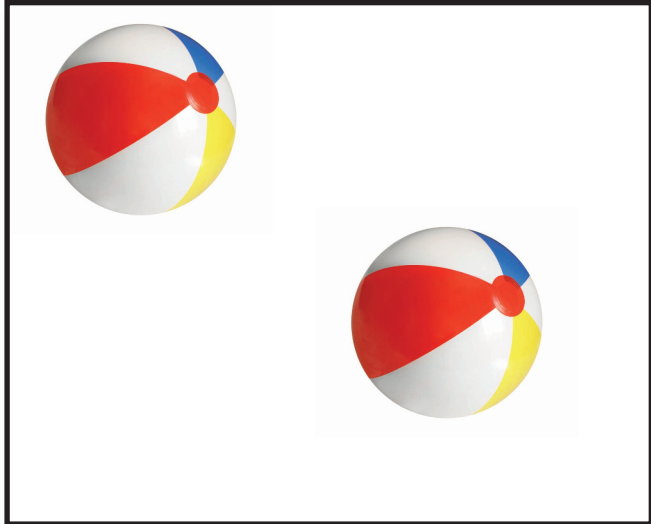
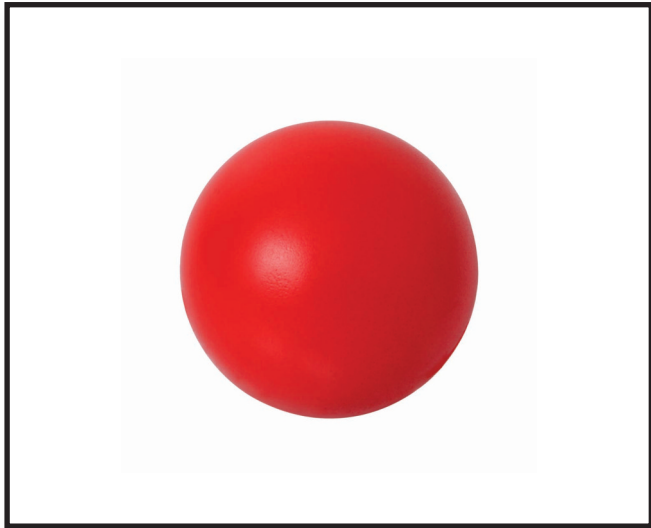
Blue ball
Small ball
Flowery ball
Three balls
Spiky ball
Orange ball

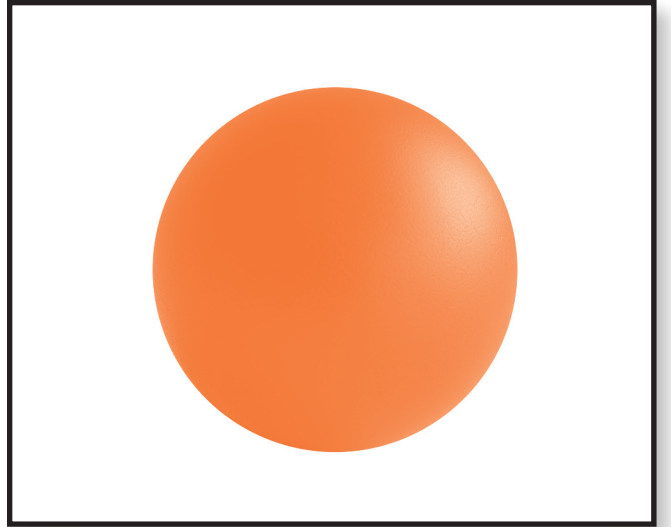
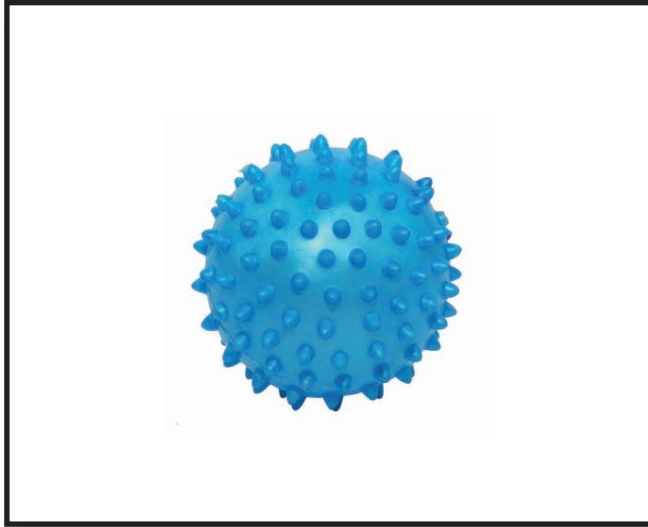
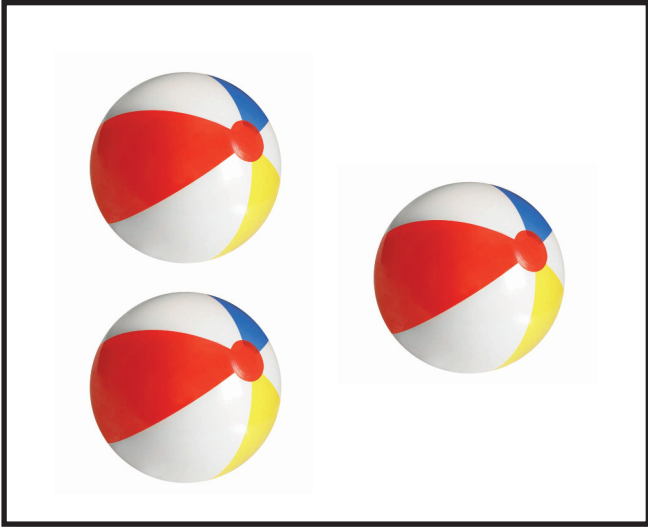
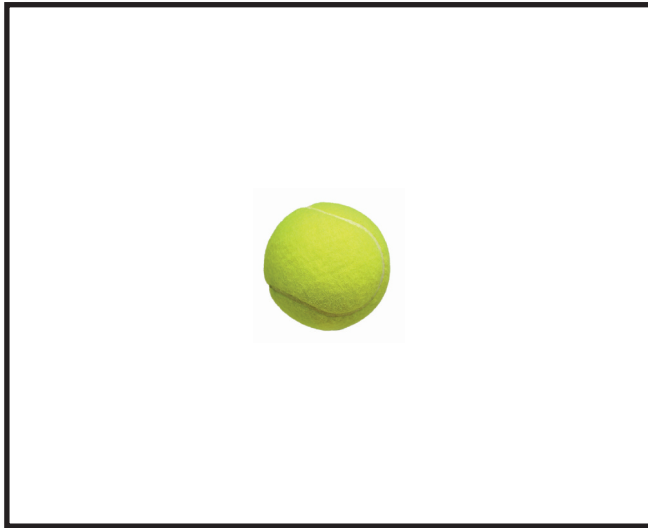
Lotto Board 3

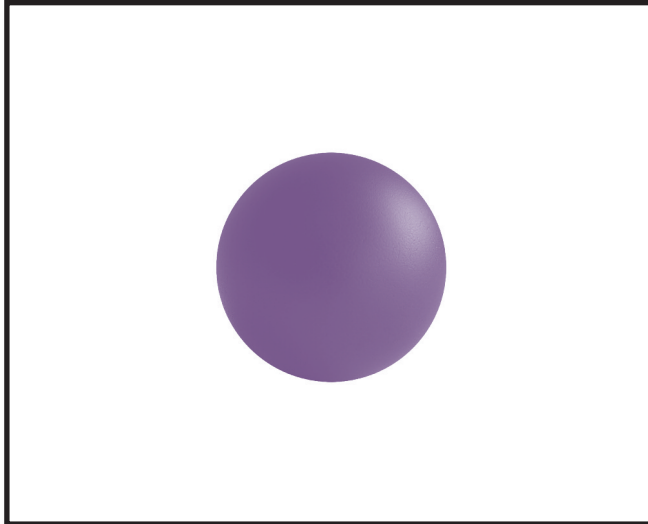
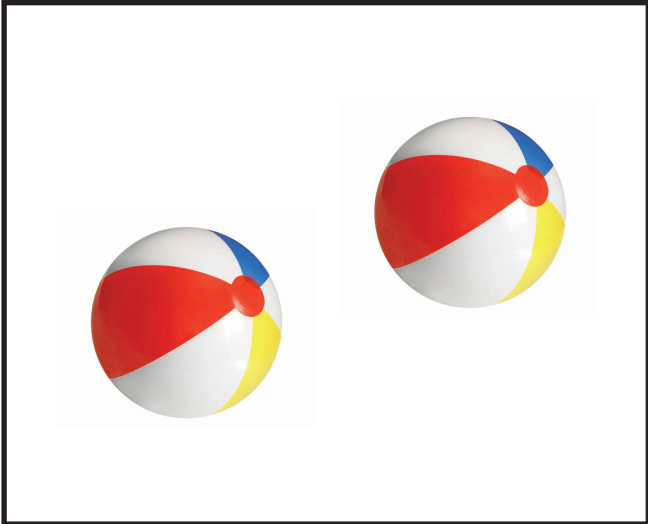
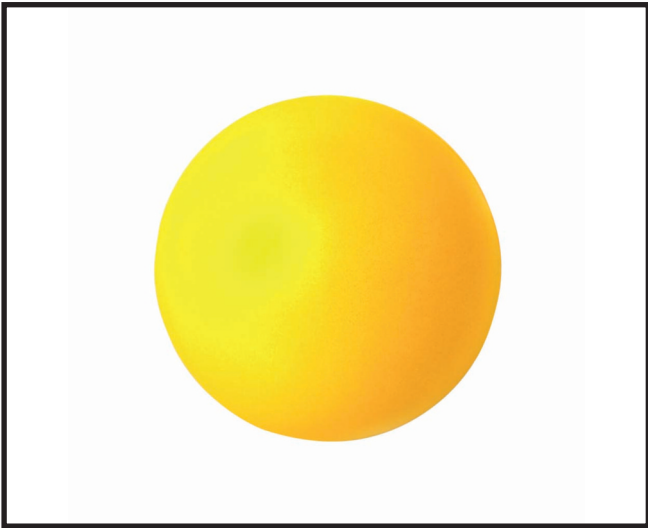
Yellow ball
Big ball
Starry ball
Two balls
Smooth ball
Brown ball

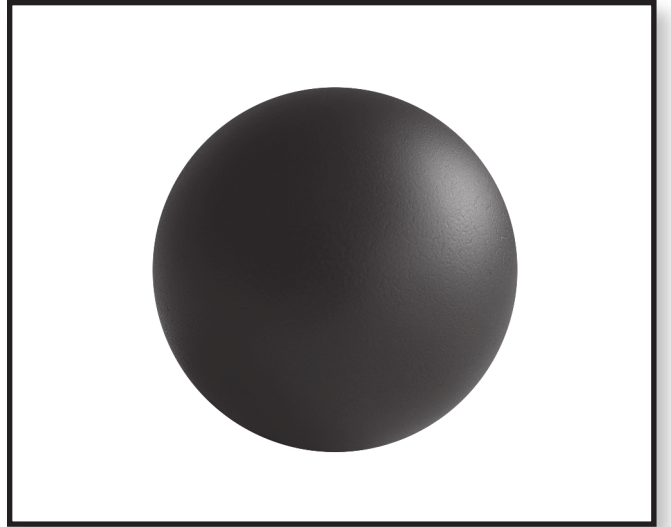
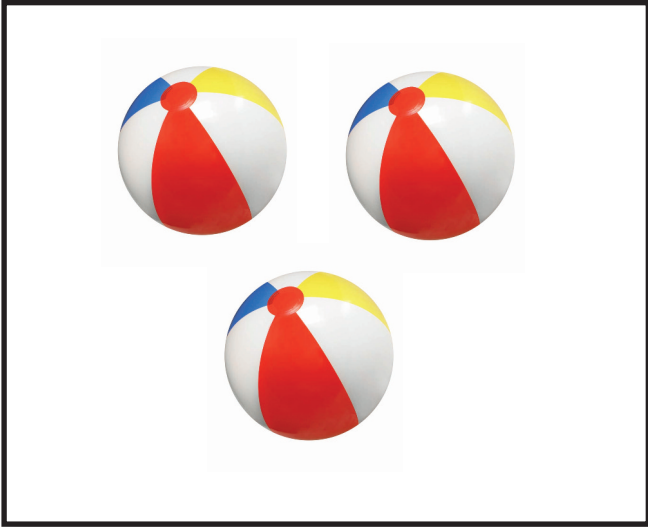
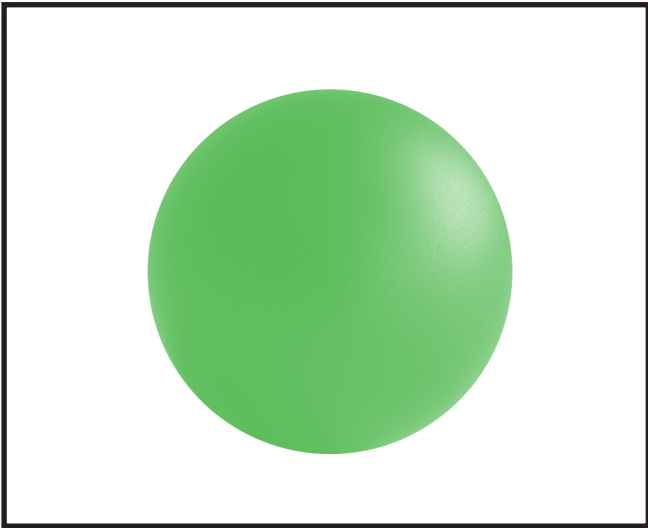
Lotto Board 4

Green ball
Small ball
Spotty ball
Three balls
Fluffy ball
Black ball









Visual Timetable Example

