

Explore & Learn

Lessons and Activities

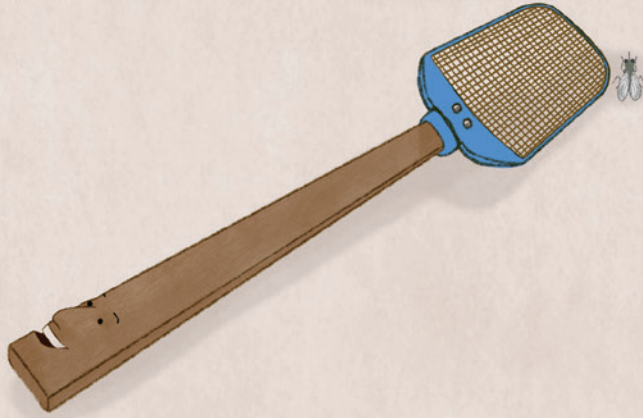
PK, TK, and VPK Instruction

How Do We Build and Explore?

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Tool Talk



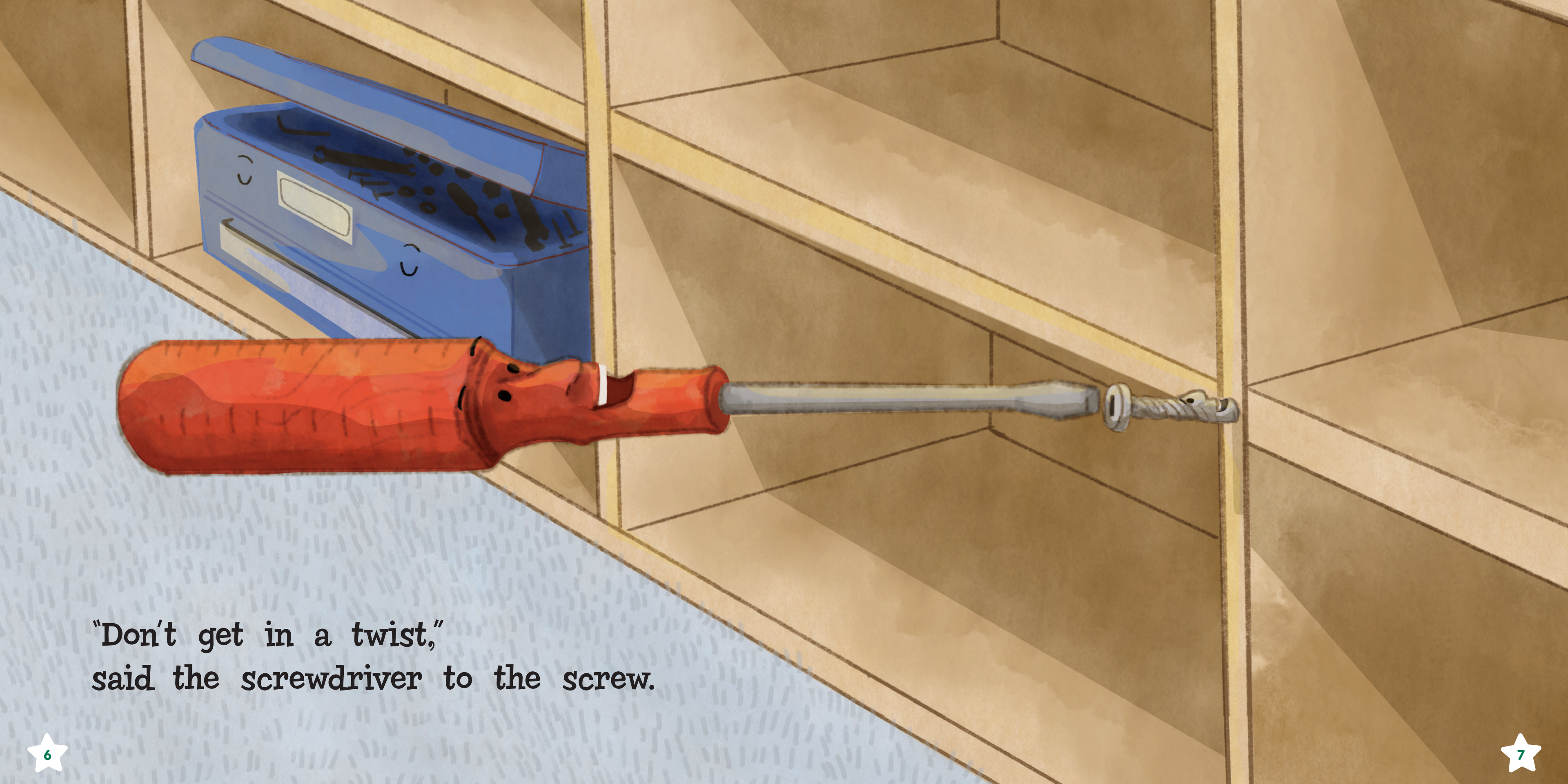
"I can dig it,"
said the shovel to the pail.





"I'll take a swing,"
said the hammer to the nail.





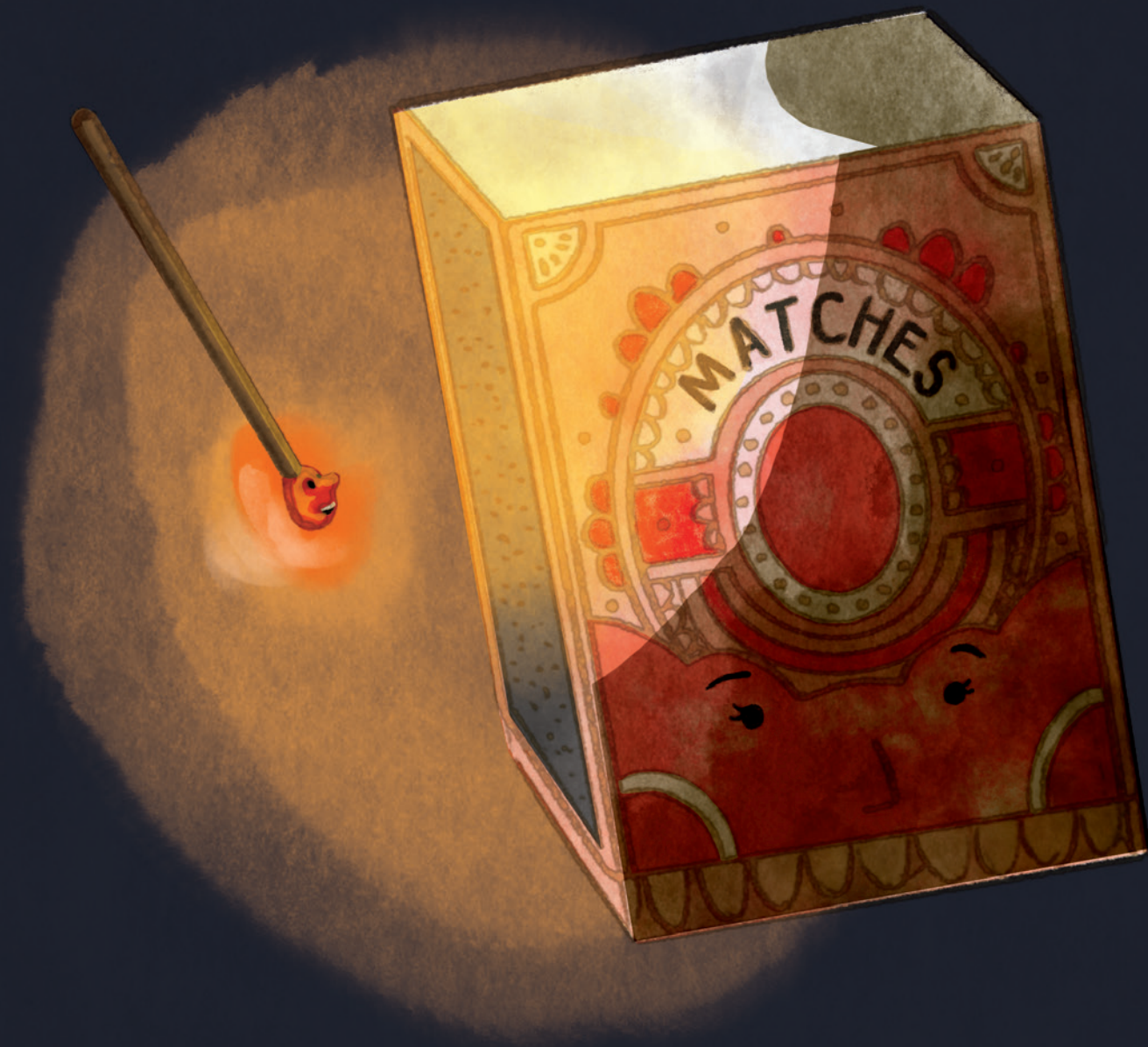
"Don't get in a twist,"
said the screwdriver to the screw.

"It's a sticky situation,"
said the pieces to the glue.



"It's a draw,"
said the pencil to the sheet.





"It's time to strike,"
said the match to the heat.

"Straighten up,"
said the level to the square.

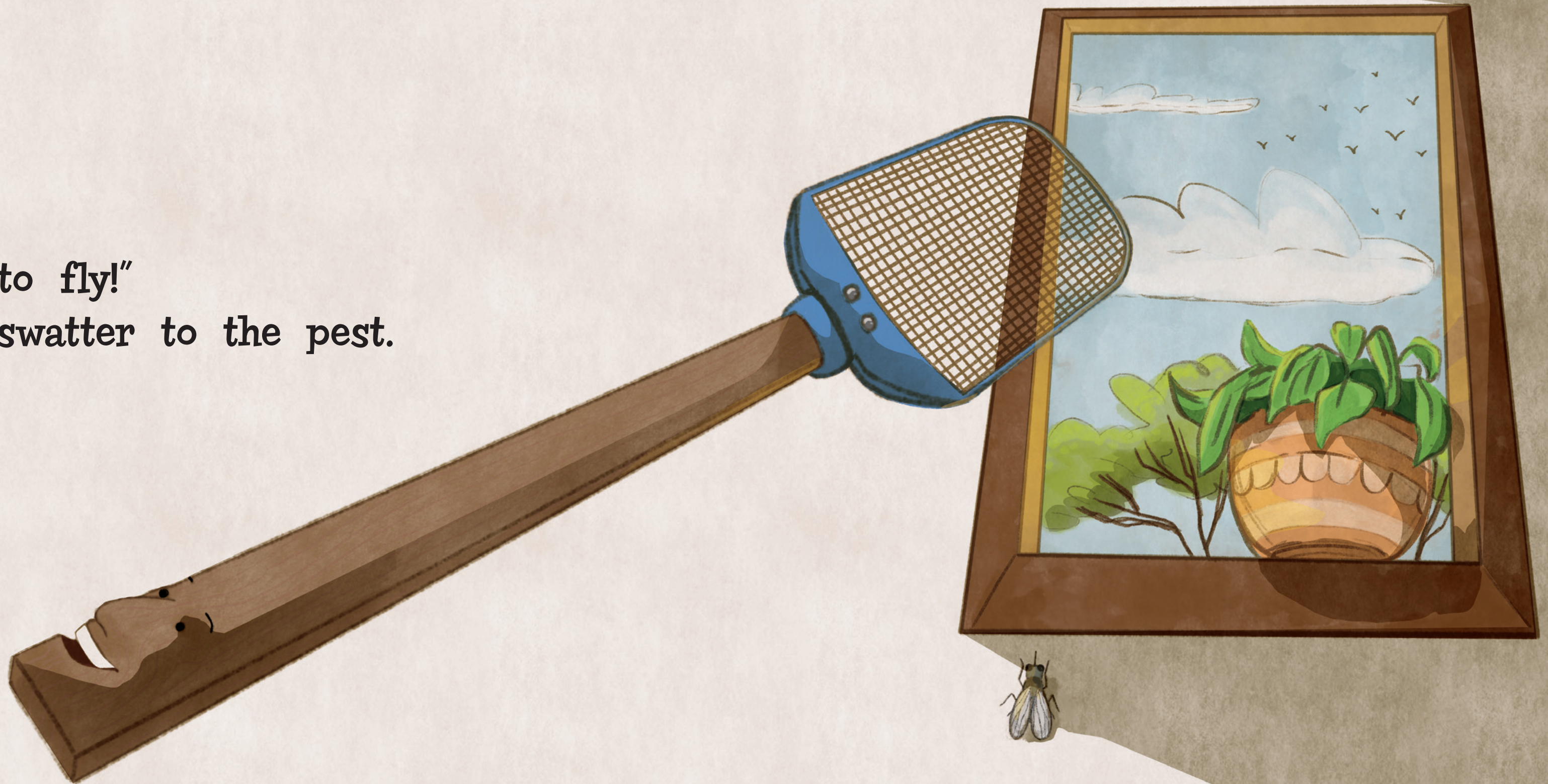




"I'll smooth things over,"
said the plane to the chair.



"I've got to fly!"
said the swatter to the pest.





"Oh, clam up,"
said the padlock to the chest.

Notes for the Grown-ups

This book allows for a rich shared reading experience for children who are early and developing readers. The rhyme and images help new readers to tell the story, either as they read or as they are read to. What a valuable tool for building the confidence new readers need to embark on the adventures that await them while reading!

To extend this reading experience, do one or more of the following:

Discuss the punctuation in the story, which includes quotation marks. Talk about what quotation marks do in a story.

If you have access to the tools mentioned in this book, take a look at them and talk about what they do.

Have fun writing your own puns about other common tools—perhaps kitchen instruments.

After reading, come back to the book again and again. Rereading is an excellent tool for building literacy skills.

Talk about puns and how each of the lines in the book includes a pun. Discuss the double meaning of each pun.

How Do We Build and Explore?

Teacher's Guide



Day 8 Preparation and Materials

Morning Meeting

- **Materials:** *Morning Meeting* routine (card 1)

Literacy

- **Materials:** *Teach Letters and Sounds* routine (card 2); copy of *Tool Talk*; sticky notes

Literacy Explorations

- **Materials:** string; clothespins; different color construction paper
- **Preparation:** Cut out a variety of previously taught shapes from the construction paper, enough for each student to receive a few shapes. Hang the string across the small-group workspace with tape or by tying the ends to nearby objects. Students should be able to reach the string, and it should be long enough to hang the cutouts. Leave the string for Days 9 and 10, and ensure that each Literacy Exploration center is prepared.

Physical Development

- **Materials:** unit books (*optional*)

Phonological Awareness

- n/a

Mathematics

- **Materials:** *Skyscraper* and *Bridge* vocabulary concept cards; *Skyscraper and Bridge Measuring Cards* (pages 97-98); string; clothespins
- **Preparation:** Prepare and cut apart a set of *Skyscraper and Bridge Measuring Cards*. Tape them on the wall in the whole-group learning space; make sure that the images are not aligned. Cut enough pieces of string for groups of three to four that are long enough to measure large objects in the classroom, such as tables, shelves, and other furniture.

Social Development

- **Materials:** *Writing Social Stories* routine (card 16); “Seeking Help” social story poster
- **Preparation:** Locate students’ social stories that they started on Day 5.

Fine Motor Development

- **Materials:** *Sky Writing* routine (card 12); *Lowercase u* (page 10 of *Student Activity Book*); pencils (one for each student)

Social Studies

- **Materials:** *Bridge* vocabulary concept card; copy of *London Bridge*; images of bridges and tunnels
- **Preparation:** Locate and prepare to share images of real bridges and tunnels on the internet or in books.

Creative Explorations

- **Materials:** *Bridge* vocabulary concept card; paper or plastic cups (about 20 for each partner pair); craft sticks (about 20 for each partner pair); toy vehicles (one for each student)
- **Preparation:** Prior to the lesson, prepare sets of blocks for partners, enough for each pair to receive the necessary blocks for building bridges.

Music and Movement

- **Materials:** “Skyscraper Rap” audio recording (*skyscraper.mp3*) and lyrics (page 96)
- **Preparation:** Prepare to share the audio recording of the song.

Closing Circle

- **Materials:** *Closing Circle* routine (card 18)

Morning Meeting



10-15
minutes



1. Follow the *Morning Meeting* routine (card 1).
2. Draw a square in clear view of students. Say, “Many things are made from squares. What are some things that are made of squares?” Accept and record a variety of student responses.
3. Say, “Let’s imagine that this plain square is a different square-shaped object.” Share the sentence frame, *It’s not a square, it’s a ____*. Model sharing your responses using the sentence frame. For example, you may say, “It’s not a square, it’s a house.”
4. Have students share their responses using the sentence frame. Students may use previously brainstormed ideas or come up with new ones.

★ ★ Free Play

Free Play is a fundamental part of the *Explore & Learn* day. See page 13 for free play ideas related to this unit.



Literacy



20-30
minutes



Alphabet Knowledge Warm-Up

1. Gather students together, and follow the *Teach Letters and Sounds* routine (card 2) to teach the letter of the day. Choose which letter to teach based on your scope and sequence. (See page 39 in the *Management Guide* for more information.)

Whole-Group Lesson

2. Display the book *Tool Talk*, and read the title aloud.
3. Say, “Yesterday, we asked and answered questions about *Tool Talk*. Today, we are going to read the book again, but this time, we will come up with our own words that the characters will say. These words are called *dialogue*.”
4. Display and read pages 2–3. Say, “I am going to create new words that the shovel might say to the pail. My new dialogue is, ‘How many scoops?’” Write the words on a sticky note, and place the sticky note on the page.
5. Display and read pages 4–5, and ask students to create new dialogue that the hammer might say to the nail. Accept a variety of student responses, recording the responses on sticky notes. Place the sticky notes on the page.
6. Follow step 5 with the remaining pages of the book.
7. Reread the book, this time reading student-created dialogue from the sticky notes.

Literacy Explorations

15-20
minutes

small groups



centers

Meet with one group to deliver Small-Group Lesson 3 (see page 16), while the rest of the students complete self-chosen centers. For more information about independent learning centers, see page 17.

Physical Development

10-15
minutes

whole group

1. Gather students together, and tell them they will play a game of charades. Say, “I’m going to act out the movements of tools, and you will guess the tools.”
2. Stretch your arms out long, and use your fist to pretend to hammer a nail. Have students guess which tool you are acting out. (*hammer*)
3. Act out the following movements to represent tools. Have students guess the tools.
 - Stand straight up and spin in a circle. (*screwdriver*)
 - Move your hand back and forth in a sawing motion. (*saw*)
 - Extend your arms wide and retract. (*tape measure*)
 - Act out digging and tossing dirt. (*shovel*)
4. If time allows, have students act out different tool movements. You may consider displaying images of tools from the unit books to provide ideas.

Phonological Awareness

10-15
minutes

whole group

1. Gather students together, and point to the door. Say, “The beginning sound in *door* is /d/. Say /d/.” Have students repeat the sound /d/.
2. Say, “Words have ending sounds, too. The ending sound is the very last sound you hear in the word. The ending sound in *door* is /r/. Say /r/.” Have students repeat just the sound /r/ as best they can.
3. Say, “I will say another word. You say the ending sound in the word.” Continue the activity with these words: *home*, *top*, *nail*, *lock*, *wrench*, and *plug*.

Extension Idea

Say three words, and have students identify the ending sounds that do not match.

- stop, lame, tap (*lame*)
- time, home, thin (*thin*)
- log, lock, stuck (*log*)
- tail, hole, paint (*paint*)



★ ★ Teacher-Choice Read-Aloud

Per the pacing plan suggestions on page 38 of the *Management Guide*, after the phonological awareness activity is a good time in the *Explore & Learn* day for a teacher-choice read-aloud.



Mathematics



20-30
minutes



Whole-Group Lesson

1. Gather students together, and explain that sometimes they might need to compare the lengths of objects that cannot be moved.
2. Hold up a piece of string, and point to the *Skyscraper and Bridge Measuring Cards* (pages 97–98) you hung up. Say, “I want to see which skyscraper is taller. I can’t move them and line them up next to each other. How can I use this string to tell which one is taller?” Accept a variety of responses.
3. Narrate as you align the string with the length of the skyscraper, and place a clothespin on the string where it aligns with the top of the skyscraper.
4. Repeat with the next skyscraper, and discuss where the clothespin lands in relation to the clothespin. Guide students to use the sentence frame, *The first skyscraper is ____.* (longer/shorter)
5. Repeat steps 2–4, this time comparing the lengths of the bridges. Provide the sentence frame, *The first bridge is ____.* (longer/shorter)

Partner Practice

6. Form groups of three to four students, and have them use pieces of string and clothespins to compare the lengths or heights of two classroom objects that cannot be moved, such as tables, book shelves, or desks. Encourage them to use the sentence frames. Repeat as time allows.

Social Development



10-15
minutes



1. Gather students together, and display the “Seeking Help” social story poster. Reread, “Cam raises her hand and asks Mr. Ronnie to help explain the directions again.” Note that the story includes actions, like Cam raising her hand.
2. Say, “Your stories probably have actions, too. Maybe you raise your hand to ask for help or tap an adult on the shoulder to get their attention. Think about adding details to your illustrations that show these actions.”
3. Distribute students’ social stories, and allow time for students to review and add to their illustrations. Have students make plans to add actions to their illustrations and share their plans with partners.
4. Have students move to workspaces, and continue to work on their social stories. Encourage students to add more details. Support the remaining students in completing step 5 of the *Writing Social Stories* routine (card 16) by scribing their stories.

Scaffolded Support

For students who are developing in their ability to draw people, quickly scribe the actions they want to add to their drawings. This can serve as a reminder if their pictures do not clearly depict the details they brainstormed.



Fine Motor Development



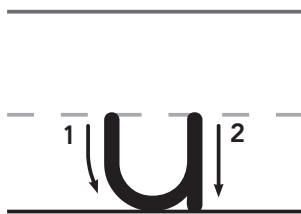
10-15
minutes



whole group



independent work



1. Have students move to their workspaces, and say, “Today, we will be writing lowercase *u*.”
2. Follow the *Sky Writing* routine (card 12) to make *u*. As you model making the lines in the air, say, “Down, curve around, up, down.” Have students practice.
3. Model writing *u* in clear view of students. As you make the movements with your writing tool, say, “Down, curve around, up, down.”
4. Have students complete *Lowercase u* (page 10 of *Student Activity Book*). As students work, monitor for proper pencil grasp, pressure, and paper positioning, correcting as needed.

Social Studies



15-25
minutes



whole group



independent work

1. Gather students together, and review the *Bridge* vocabulary concept card.
2. Show images of real bridges you prepared, and discuss their purpose.
3. Reread the book *London Bridge*. Ask, “What would happen if a bridge fell down?” Accept a variety of student responses.
4. Show images of tunnels, and discuss their purpose. Discuss the similarities and differences between bridges and tunnels.
5. Tell students that they will be using what they have learned about bridges and tunnels to complete a fun building activity during Creative Explorations.

Language Development Support

During step 4, provide the sentence frames, *Bridges are different from tunnels because ____.* and *Bridges are similar to tunnels because ____.*



Creative Explorations



15-20
minutes



whole group



partner work

1. Gather students together, and say, “Today, we are going to use cups and craft sticks to make bridges and tunnels.” Model using the cups and craft sticks to build a bridge, narrating as you lay the craft sticks between cups. Guide students to notice that a tunnel is formed under the bridge.
2. Have partners move to their workspaces, and distribute cups and craft sticks to each pair. Have partners spend a few minutes planning their bridges. Then, have students use the materials to build bridges and tunnels.
3. When students have completed their bridges, distribute toy vehicles. Have partners practice driving the vehicles across the bridges and under the tunnels. Encourage students to use the words *bridge* and *tunnel* as they move the cars.
4. If time allows, have students build new bridges. Have partners discuss what was successful and what could be improved when building their bridges.

Free Play Idea

Place cups and craft sticks in the blocks center. Encourage students to build bridges and tunnels during free play. Challenge students to build the longest bridges they can.



Music and Movement



10-15
minutes



whole group

1. Gather students together, and say, “Let’s add movements to our new song, ‘Skyscraper Rap.’”
2. Read the lyrics, and model hammering with your fist and palm each time you say, “Hammer.” Have students repeat the lyrics and movements.
3. Play the audio recording of the song, having students sing the words. Have students perform the hammer movements when the lyrics indicate.

Closing Circle



5-10
minutes



whole group

1. Follow the *Closing Circle* routine (card 18).
2. If time allows, choose an extension activity from the routine card.

Card 1

Morning Meeting

Objective: Students will build community through safe, predictable routines.

Materials: Daily Picture Schedule Cards ([schedulecards.pdf](#); *optional*)

Gather and Greet

1. Signal to the whole group that it is time to gather for the morning meeting. You may choose to use a song as a transition.
2. Gather students together in a circle. Remind students about personal space and the importance of keeping their hands and feet to themselves.
3. Have students greet each other. You may choose to do a whole-class greeting with a song or have students pass one of the following greetings around the circle by greeting the peers next to them:
 - high five
 - fist bump
 - elbow bump
 - wave

Our Day

4. Share the plan for the day. This can be done by reviewing the *Daily Picture Schedule Cards* together or through a morning message—a short note addressed to the class that includes one or two main events that will take place during the day. The daily learning objectives are included in the *Teacher's Guide* for your easy reference.

Theme

5. Have students engage with the theme, color, shape, and/or phrase of the week. Ideas are included in the daily lesson plans in the *Teacher's Guide*.

Card 2

Teach Letters and Sounds

Objective: Students will learn the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent to support reading readiness and emergent writing skills.

Materials: *Letter Cards* ([lettercards.pdf](#))

Preparation: Choose which letters to teach based on your scope and sequence. (See page 39 in the *Management Guide* for more information.) Prepare to share the selected *Letter Cards*.

Name It

1. Display the selected *Letter Card*, and say, "This is the letter _____. This is a capital _____ (*point to the capital letter*), and this is a lowercase _____ (*point to the lowercase letter*)."
2. Point to the *Letter Card*, and say, "What letter is this?" (*Students respond with the letter name.*)

Say It

3. Say the sound the letter represents, and discuss how the sound is formed. Have students repeat the sound several times.

Write It

4. With your finger, trace the capital letter on the card. Narrate your movements, describing the starting point and the types of lines you are forming.
5. Ask students to hold up their pointer fingers and form the lines of the uppercase letter on flat surfaces. Have students repeat the sound the letter makes while they are forming the letter.
6. Repeat steps 4-5 with the formation of the lowercase letter.

bridge



**a structure that connects
two places**

bridge

Related Words

overpass

tunnel

walkway

Sentence

Mom drives over the **bridge** to get to my karate class.

Engage

- ★ Have you ever driven or walked over a bridge? How did you feel when you crossed over it?
- ★ Bridges need to be strong to support the weight of cars, trains, and people. What do you think construction workers use to build bridges?
- ★ Why do people need bridges?
- ★ Look at the picture. How are these bridges used?



Seeking Help

Cam E. Chameleon is buzzing with excitement this morning. Her class is going to have a guest today to help them build a birdhouse. Cam loves to build things and knows she is going to have so much fun doing it. As Cam comes running into the classroom, Ms. Lee smiles but tells Cam to slow down and take deep breaths.

Cam puts all her things away. Then, she spots the table with the tools on it. She finds a spot with her name and sits down, ready to get started. Ms. Lee introduces the class to Mr. Ronnie, the guest builder. Mr. Ronnie shows the class all the pieces they will use to build the birdhouses and begins giving directions. Cam is trying to follow along, but she starts to feel confused.

Cam raises her hand and asks Mr. Ronnie to explain the directions again. Mr. Ronnie pulls up a chair to explain everything to Cam. He shows Cam where the pieces go. He even shows her how to use the exact amount of glue she needs so she doesn't run out or have any left over. **When Cam gets confused, she raises her hand and asks an adult for help. She is patient until an adult is able to answer her questions.**

When Cam finishes, she is beaming with pride. Mr. Ronnie asks her to use her favorite color, which is purple, to paint the birdhouse. When Cam comes home, her parents help her hang the birdhouse on a tree right outside her room. Every time she looks at it, she remembers how all the grown-ups were there to help her.

Key Words

asks
build
buzzing
confused
explain
help
how
introduces
started



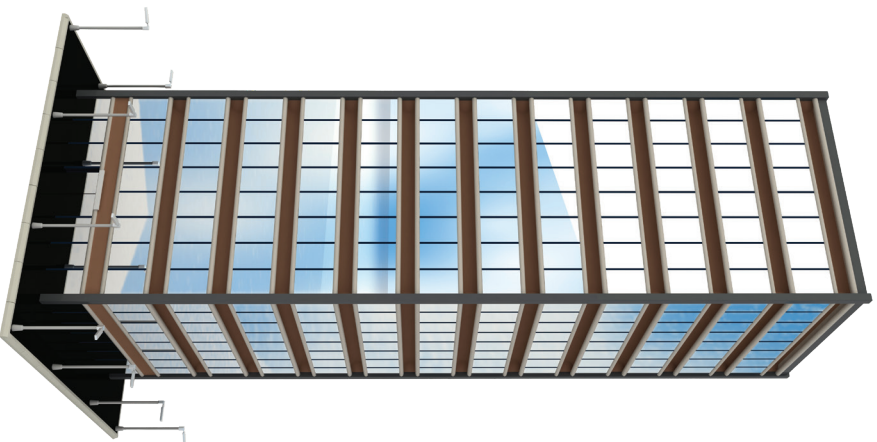
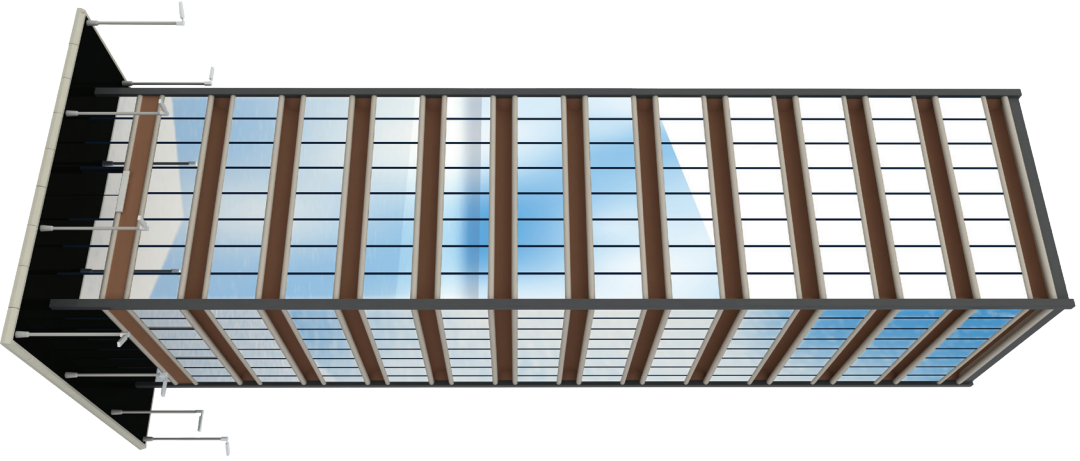
Listen



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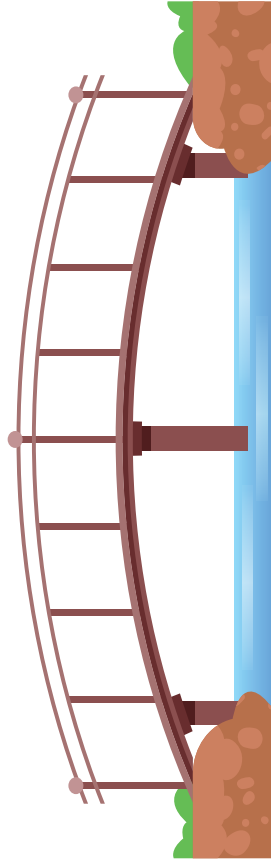
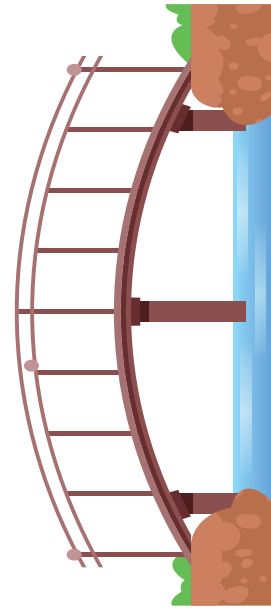
Skyscraper and Bridge Measuring Cards

Make a copy of these cards for the Day 8 lesson.



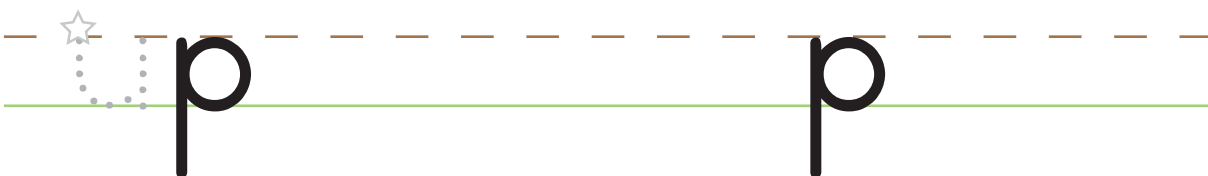
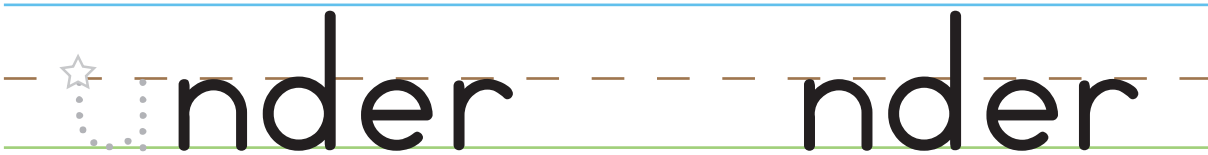
Skyscraper and Bridge Measuring Cards (cont.)

Make copies of these cards for the Day 8 lesson.



Name: _____

Lowercase u



Adults, read this aloud: Start at each star. Trace each letter. Then, write your own letters.

Social Development and Executive Functioning

Social development and executive functioning include skills and competencies that are essential to getting along with others and managing cognitive processes to regulate behavior. Developing these skills is essential in early childhood as young learners set the foundation for healthy identity development and strong interpersonal relationships.

There are six components that will be assessed in this area:

- **Building Relationships**—Building relationships is the ability to establish and maintain relationships with peers and adults. This involves communicating with others, working together to achieve shared goals, and navigating social situations that may involve differences or conflicts.
- **Social Awareness**—Social awareness is the capacity of early learners to become aware of the needs, desires, and perspectives of others. This involves feeling empathy and showing care for others. Students use cues and situational context to learn that other people’s perspectives may be different from their own. Social awareness also involves understanding and navigating social norms.
- **Decision-Making**—Decision-making involves the processes through which prekindergarten students gather information and make choices that balance their own needs and rights with others’ needs and rights. When making personal choices and engaging in social interactions, students consider different ideas and solutions. They also reflect on and evaluate the consequences of their decision-making.
- **Working Memory**—Working memory is the capacity to hold information in mind for a short amount of time. Young learners draw on working memory to process information and complete tasks. This includes focusing when gathering information, organizing thoughts and information, following multistep directions, and problem-solving.
- **Attention**—Attention involves the ability to take in information from the environment and select and focus on one or more things. Students at this level are developing their abilities to sustain attention for increasing lengths of time. Attention involves focusing sufficiently to understand information or perform a task and ignore distractions.
- **Self-Control**—Self-control is the ability to manage one’s own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions. This includes regulating emotions in various social situations, delaying gratification, and controlling impulses to make thoughtful and intentional choices.



Social Development and Executive Functioning Rubric

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Use the *Social Development and Executive Functioning Checklist* to summarize these skills throughout this unit. Based on your notes and annotations on the checklist, determine at which level the student is working for each criterion. Circle or highlight the rating for each component.

	Advancing	Meeting	Emerging	Beginning
Building Relationships	Builds, sustains, and expands relationships.	Builds and sustains relationships.	Starting to build and sustain relationships.	Starting to build relationships with support.
Social Awareness	Considers the needs, desires, and perspectives of others when making choices.	Is aware of the needs, desires, and perspectives of others.	Starting to be aware of the needs and desires of others.	Starting to be aware of the needs of others with support.
Decision-Making	Considers multiple ideas when making choices that balance own needs and rights with others.	Makes choices that balance own needs and rights with others.	Starting to make choices that balance own needs and rights with others.	Starting to make choices with support.
Working Memory	Recalls information to follow multi-step directions and solve problems.	Recalls information to follow multi-step directions.	Starting to recall information to follow directions.	Starting to recall information for short amounts of time with support.
Attention	Focuses and sustains attention for increasing periods of time.	Focuses and sustains attention.	Starting to focus and sustain attention.	Starting to focus on one thing with support.
Self-Control	Manages own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions in various social situations.	Manages own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions in routine situations.	Starting to manage own feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and actions.	Starting to manage own feelings and thoughts with support.