

We Skoolhouse



Ready-Made Curriculum: Paper Exploration



A Practical Guide for Exploration

Each unit offers a suggested flow of experiences designed to support deep, meaningful learning through play. You'll notice intentional repetition—this is purposeful. Repeating activities builds memory, mastery, confidence, attention, and focus, forming the foundation for long-term learning.

The experiences are open-ended & process-driven, focusing on how children learn rather than what they produce. This allows for a range of learning styles & encourages exploration at each child's unique pace.

Flexibility Matters

Each unit includes a suggested daily activity guide to support your planning—but it's not meant to be followed rigidly or completed in a set order:

- **Follow the children's lead:** If they're deeply engaged, slow down. If interest fades, it's okay to pause and return later. Some children need time to warm up to new ideas—don't move on too quickly. Repeating an invitation over several days can spark richer engagement.
- **Move at your own pace:** Stretch a week into two, repeat activities as long as needed, and allow units to grow over time.
- **Revisit, don't rush:** There's no need to introduce a new unit each month. Returning to a familiar concept—like revisiting water after exploring texture or paint—deepens understanding and strengthens memory. Revisiting isn't starting over—it's going further.

This guide is about making space for curiosity, experimentation, and meaningful learning. Use it as a springboard—trust yourself, trust the children, and allow learning to unfold naturally.



Unit: Paper Exploration

Paper exploration invites babies to move, touch, crinkle, tear, and observe a variety of textures, sounds, & shapes. From crawling across large sheets to ripping, stomping, or swatting hanging pieces, infants engage both fine & gross motor skills while exploring cause and effect. These open-ended experiences support coordination, strength, and sensory processing, while encouraging curiosity & active discovery.

Domain	How It Supports Development
Physical	Strengthens grasp reflex, hand-eye coordination, & emerging fine motor control through crumpling, tearing, & swiping. Gross motor is supported through whole body cardboard box play. Different paper textures offer varied tactile & auditory input.
Cognitive	Supports cause-and-effect understanding (e.g., "crinkle = sound") and sensory discrimination as babies explore paper types (tissue, foil, cardboard). Encourages repetition and experimentation.
Language	Promotes sound-meaning association as caregivers label textures, actions, and sounds ("soft," "rip," "loud"). Builds joint attention and auditory processing through paper play paired with language.
Social-Emotional	Builds trust and co-regulation through calm, playful interactions like peekaboo with tissue or hiding toys under paper. Sensory input can be soothing and support emotional engagement.

Unit: Paper Exploration

Focus Materials: Paper, cardboard boxes, paper tubes, paint, tissue paper, recycled scraps

Books: Big Box for Ben, by Deborah Bruss, Not a Box by Antoinette Portis, and I Touch by Helen Oxenbury

Songs: "Open, Shut Them" and "One Little Finger"

Vocabulary: Paper, box, crinkle, rip, flap, fold, tear, open, close, roll, smooth, rough, crunch, peek, hide

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Paper discovery basket	Paper discovery basket	Crawling through cardboard tunnel	Paper discovery basket	Crawling through cardboard tunnel
Week 2	Crawling through cardboard tunnel	Paper discovery basket	Focus Material: Tissue paper: Crinkling/ripping	Crawling through cardboard tunnel	Focus Material: Tissue paper: Crinkling/ripping
Week 3	Focus Material: Tissue paper: Crinkling/ripping	Paper ball toss	Paper discovery basket	Paper roll stampers	Paper ball toss
Week 4	Paper roll stampers	Paper roll stampers	Focus Material: Tissue paper: Crinkling/ripping	Paper discovery basket	Crawling through cardboard tunnel

Unit: Paper Exploration

Suggested Activities

- **Paper discovery basket:** A basket of assorted safe paper—tissue, paper rolls (full or empty), and scraps—invites babies to grasp, mouth, pull, and crumple, offering rich sensory feedback.
- **Crawling through cardboard tunnel:** Large cardboard boxes become tunnels for babies to crawl through, hide, and re-emerge, supporting gross motor skills and spatial awareness. The sides also offer support for pulling up and leaning in a standing position.
- **Focus Material: Tissue paper:** Crinkling/Ripping: Babies scrunch and tear tissue paper, strengthening fine motor skills and enjoying the satisfying sound and texture.
- **Paper ball toss:** Lightweight paper balls are tossed or rolled across the floor or into containers, encouraging movement, tracking, and hand-eye coordination in a playful way.
- **Paper roll stampers:** Empty paper rolls dipped in safe paint or water are used to stamp on large paper, offering early mark-making through full-hand motion and visual discovery.

Alternatives and Extensions:

Explore these simple variations to extend play, supporting repetition, variety, and deeper sensory learning:

- **Tree bark touching:** Babies explore the rough and bumpy texture of bark or wood by patting and rubbing the surface.
- **Giant floor paper with paint:** Large paper taped to the floor invites babies to crawl or step across with non-toxic paint, combining full-body movement with sensory mark-making.

