

Activity Guide: January

Items in green are included in your PBL kit from CMNH

Ages 0-24 months:

- Explore cause & effect with **balls**:
 - Make a simple cardboard ramp for the balls. Try to design it so it is low on the floor and accessible for babies.
 - Roll the balls down the ramp, watch them roll away, try again, roll the balls up the ramp, crawl/toddle/run after the runaway balls, etc!
 - For older children, glue on strips of construction paper on the ramp in colors that correspond to the colors of the balls. This will be an invitation for them to match the ball color to the color on the ramp before sending them down, if they want!
- Hide and seek with **blocks & toys**:
 - Set out the set of **stacking blocks**. Hide a few of the **bath buddy animals** under the blocks. Show babies how to pick up the blocks and peek under to see if there is an animal there. Encourage them to look on their own.
 - Alternatively, set the blocks out upside down so they are each a small container. Place bath buddies in a few of the blocks and place **scarves** on top as a "cover", show babies how to remove the scarves and check inside for animals!



Ronan, son of Museum staffer Colie, is 10 months old.

"He didn't understand the ramp right away, but after a few play sessions, he loved putting the balls down by himself!"

Ages 2-3 years:

- **Mixing bowl** exploration:

- Set out the set of **mixing bowls**, lids, and utensils and see what play happens!
 - They may become drums, sorting containers, little seats, a stacking set, or something completely different.
 - [We would love to hear](#) about how the children at your organization played with the bowls, photos are great, too!

The music that the bowls can provide is very cool. To encourage this, show children how to gently tap the bowls when they are upside down, and then right side up--how is the sound different? What happens to the sound when you put the lids on the bowls?

- A great--and very interactive!-- book to share all about different musical instruments is [Play This Book](#) by Jessica Young & Daniel Wiseman

- **Parachute Play!**

- Put out the **parachute** and some sorting items
 - Invite children to sort the items into the colors that appear on the parachute. Start by sorting a few first and then let the children join in once they see the activity.
 - **NOTE:** If you put out light weight sorting items (maybe borrow some of the **balls from the 0-24 month items**) then the sorted items can be bounced around in the parachute to mix them up again!



Jules, daughter of Museum staffer Meredith, is 2 years old.

"She loves the bowls. She's done a million things with them, but using them as a musical instrument is always the winner! I love when she sits on one of the big bowls and uses the others as drums--cute and clever!"

Ages 4-5 years:

- Building playscapes:
 - Start by setting up some play opportunities for the children at your organization.
 - Quickly create some environments by putting down **scarves** (blue can be water, green can be grass, etc), build roads or fences around them with the **large cardboard blocks**, maybe use the **balance board** as a bridge over the water.
 - Put some of the **counting manipulatives** or other animals/trucks/boats/etc that you have in the classroom around the playscape.
 - See how children interact and play with this space! Encourage them to create their own playscapes. Will they create one for dinosaurs using red & orange scarves as lava? Make a cave under the balance board for bears and other hibernating animals? It's always so fun to see how children PLAY!

Watch what kind of playscapes they build and then find books that relate to those ideas.

- *Ex: if they build a lot of playscapes that have to do with dinosaurs, find some great dino books to encourage that play to continue!*



Naomi, granddaughter of Museum volunteer Cindel, is four years old.

"We set up the playscape so it was ready for her to play with when she got home from school. It immediately caught her interest and she grabbed some other toys to add to the playscape (a fish for the "water" section!) It was neat to see how such simple items can create such an exciting invitation to play"