



Big Ideas

Here are some big ideas about animals on the farm that you can help children explore:

- Horses and cows live on a farm.
- Horses and cows are big animals.



Materials to Collect and Make

Featured Books

Big Red Barn by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Felicia Bond
Old Macdonald Had a Farm illustrated by Pam Adams (+BB)
I Went Walking by Sue Williams, illustrated by Julie Vivas (+BB)

Mother Goose Books

Key: (BB) – Available in Board Book only
 (+BB) – Also available in Board Book

Note: See the **Book List** section for additional books that can be used if some of the featured books are unavailable and as supplemental books to read with children.

Storytelling Figures and Illustrated Mother Goose Rhyme Charts

- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the Mother Goose Rhyme, "[Little Boy Blue](#)"
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the Mother Goose Rhyme, "[Hey Diddle Diddle](#)"
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for [I Went Walking](#)
- Illustrated Mother Goose Rhyme chart for "[Little Boy Blue](#)"
- Illustrated Mother Goose Rhyme chart for "[Hey Diddle Diddle](#)"

Additional Materials

- Pictures of farm animals: horses, cows, pigs, goats, sheep, chickens, ducks, geese
- Pictures of barns and farmyards
- Farm / barn play set with animals
- Collection of vinyl (washable) farm animals
- Farm animal cube
- Coffee can barn
- Large box
- Small boxes
- Red tempera paint
- Spray paint (unleaded)
- Small and large paint brushes



Book List

*Featured Books

**Big Red Barn* by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Felicia Bond

**Old Macdonald Had a Farm* illustrated by Pam Adams

**I Went Walking* by Sue Williams, illustrated by Julie Vivas

Ask Mr. Bear by Marjorie Flack

Barnyard Banter by Denise Fleming

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin, Jr., illustrated by Eric Carle

The Everything Book by Denise Fleming

Spots, Feathers, and Curly Tails by Nancy Tafuri

This is the Farmer by Nancy Tafuri

Time for Bed by Mem Fox, illustrated by Jane Dyer

Touch and Feel: Farm Animals by Dorling Kindersley

Where Is My Baby? By Harriett Ziefert and Simms Taback



Reading Books with Toddlers

Note: Review the section in **Curriculum Tips and Techniques** on Reading Books with Children, for suggestions on how to use books with children.

Benchmarks: 4.5.C Shows enjoyment of books and stories
4.3.C Responds to verbal and non-verbal communication

Book: *Big Red Barn* by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Felicia Bond (YT & OT)

First Reading of *The Big Red Barn*

- Place a collection of vinyl farm animals in a container. Include all of the animals found in the book that are available.
- Say to children, "I'm taking this basket of animals to the book area. Would you like to join me?"
- Invite children who join you to hold and explore the animals.
- Listen to children's comments about the animals to give you insight into what they know about them.
- Invite children to name the animals. Help with the names as needed.
- Collect the animals and put the container out of sight of the children.
- Show the cover of the book and invite children to name the animals they see. Provide correct names for animals that children may incorrectly name. For example, if they call the donkey a horse, say, "It looks a lot like a horse, but it's a donkey. Horses are bigger than donkeys."
- Give title of book and explain to children that a barn is where some animals live.
- Read each page and invite children to locate the animals in each picture.
- Bring out the container of animals and invite children to again play with the animals. Make comments such as, "Victoria, you are playing with the cow. There was a cow in the story we just read."

Note: Know your children and their attention spans; especially **Younger Toddlers**. If the book seems too long for them, consider just showing the pictures and naming and describing the animals rather than reading all of the text.

Second Reading of *Big Red Barn*

- Place farm animals in a container and take to the book area. Keep the container out of sight until the end of the story.
- Invite children to join you to hear a story about the animals who live in the big red barn.
- Show the cover of the book and invite children to name the animals they see.
- Read the story with the children.
- Bring out the container of animals and place the animals on the floor.
- Invite children to play with the animals.
- Show a page of the book and say, "I see a horse on this page. Does anyone have a horse? Yes, Jonathan, you have a horse."
- Continue this activity with the other animals.

Extension:

- Read the story with the children and invite them to make the different animal sounds featured in the book.
- Bring a farm/barn play set with animals to the book area. Follow up the reading of the story by setting the play set on the floor and inviting children to play with it.

Note: *Make a red barn from a small sturdy cardboard box or a small wood box if a purchased play set is not available. Add the farm animals.*

Note: *Make sure all of the animals are large enough to not be a choking hazard.*

Note: *Wash the vinyl animals daily to prevent the spread of germs.*

Book: *Old Macdonald Had a Farm* illustrated by Pam Adams

First Reading of *Old Macdonald Had a Farm* (YT & OT)

- Begin to sing the song, "Old Macdonald Had a Farm", as you go to the book area.
- Sing one or two verses as children join you.
- Show the cover to children who join you and say, "This is Old Macdonald" as you point to his picture. "I need you to name some of the animals he had on his farm."
- Point to each animal and invite children to name it.
- Read or sing the song as you turn the pages.
- Call children's attention to the animal in the cutout that is featured on each page.
- Show the last page, point to an animal, make the sound for each animal, and invite children to repeat the sound.

Second Reading of *Old Macdonald Had a Farm*

- Place a collection of vinyl animals that are featured in the book in a container and take it to the book area.
- Begin to sing the song, "Old Macdonald Had a Farm."
- Show the cover and give the title of the book.
- Begin to read or sing the first verse, lines two and three.
- Show the vinyl dog as you sing the third line, "and on that farm he had a _____."
- Invite children to say the name of the animal.
- Continue with each verse and animal.

Extension:

- Follow up a reading of the story by showing each page with the cutouts, point to the featured animal, and invite children to make the animal sound.

Book: *I Went Walking* by Sue Williams, illustrated by Julie Vivas

First Reading of *I Went Walking* (YT & OT)

- Invite children to join you in the book area to hear a story about animals.
- Show the cover and give the title of the book.
- Invite children to tell you what they see on the cover.
- Read the story with the children. Allow time for them to look at and talk about the animals on each page.
- Call attention to how big the horse and the cow are in relationship to the other animals.
- Follow up the first reading by showing the pages with animals and inviting children to name them. Encourage children to use color words such as “black” cat as part of the name.

Second Reading of *I Went Walking* (OT)

- Invite children to go walking with you to the book area to read a story about animals.
- Show the cover and give the title of the book.
- Involve children in predicting what the boy will see on the next page by inviting them to look for clues. For example, read, “I went walking. What did you see?” Call attention to the basket and ask children who they think is in the basket. Help them notice the cat’s tail, ears and whiskers.
- Say, “Let’s see if you were correct. Will there be a black cat (or whatever were their predictions) on the next page?”
- Turn the page and read the words, “I saw a black cat looking at me.” and say, “You were correct (if they were). It was a black cat.”
- Continue to the end of the book. Give additional verbal clues if the visual clues are not enough. For example, for the cow, say, “This is a big animal and it says moo.”
- Follow up the reading by showing the pages with the clues and inviting children to say the name of the animal that will be on the next page. Were their predictions more accurate this time?

Additional Benchmark: 6.3.C Develops strategies for solving problems



**Language
and
Cognitive
Materials
and
Experiences**

**Benchmarks: 4.4.C Communicates through language
4.5.C Shows enjoyment of books and stories**

Planned Experience: Storytelling (YT & OT)

Mother Goose Rhyme, “[Little Boy Blue](#)”
Mother Goose Rhyme, “[Hey Diddle Diddle](#)”

How to begin:

- Make felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the rhyme.
- Read the rhyme with the children from a Mother Goose book that has one rhyme per page so that children can see illustrations more clearly.
- Use the storytelling figures to say the rhyme.
- Involve children in placing figures on the storyboard when you feel they can do this.

Planned Experience: Illustrated Mother Goose Rhyme Chart (YT & OT)

“[Little Boy Blue](#)”
“[Hey Diddle Diddle](#)”

How to begin:

- Make an illustrated rhyme chart for the rhyme. Laminate or cover the chart with clear self-adhesive paper for durability. (Refer to Tips and Techniques: Making Charts, for information on making charts).
- Read the rhyme at another time, again using a Mother Goose book.
- Show the rhyme chart and again read the rhyme with the children.

- Post the rhyme chart on the wall at children’s eye level. Observe children and, if they notice the chart, join them in saying the rhyme.

Note: Use the rhyme charts as the children are learning about other animals. For example, “Hey Diddle Diddle” can be used when children are learning about dogs and cats and “Little Boy Blue” can be used when children are learning about sheep.

Benchmark: 4.5.C Shows enjoyment of books and stories

Planned Experience: Storytelling (YT & OT)

I Went Walking (See Attachment: [I Went Walking](#))

How to begin:

- Make either felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the story.
- Read the story with children several times so that they are familiar with the characters and the order of events.
- Use the storytelling figures to tell the story.
- Involve children in placing figures on the storyboard when you feel they can do this.

Benchmark: 4.4.C Communicates through language

A Little Girl Went Walking

A little girl went walking
 One lovely summer day
 She saw an old brown cow
 Eating lots of hay.

A little girl went walking
 One lovely summer day
 She saw a frisky horse
 He went neigh, neigh, neigh. (make neighing sound like horse)

Ten Frisky Horses

Ten frisky horses, in a meadow green,	(Hold up ten fingers)
Ten frisky horses, friskiest ever seen.	
They go for a gallop,	(Motion of hands galloping)
They go for a trot.	(Motion of hands trotting)
They come to a stop in the big feed lot.	(Hands still)
Ten frisky horses, fat and well fed,	(Hold up ten fingers)
Curl up together on a soft, straw bed.	(Fingers closed in hands)

All Around the Farm

(Sing to tune of “The Wheels on the Bus”)

The cows on the farm go moo, moo, moo,
 Moo, moo, moo,
 Moo, moo, moo.
 The cows on the farm go moo, moo, moo,
 All around the farm.

The horses on the farm go neigh, neigh, neigh,
Neigh, neigh, neigh.
The horses on the farm go neigh, neigh, neigh,
All around the farm.

Galloping

I like to ride on a galloping horse.

Gillipy, gallopy

Trot – trot - trot.

(make up and down motions with alternating hands)

Over the hilltop,
Down through the lane,
Leaping the fence
To the barnyard lot.

(large motion of jumping fence)

Oh, it's rollicking, rollicking fun
Is it not?

To go gillipy, gallopy

Trot – trot – trot.

(make galloping motions with hands)

To ride gillipy gallopy,

Trot – trot – trot.

(make up and down motions with alternating hands)

Note: *Say the rhyme with a galloping rhythm.*

Benchmarks: 4.3.C Communicates through language
6.3.C Develops strategies for solving problems

Planned Experience: Peek-a-boo Guess Who? (YT & OT)

Materials: pictures of farm animals, clear self-adhesive paper, magnetic tape, magnetic board or metal cookie sheet.

How to begin:

- Cut out farm animals and laminate or cover with clear self-adhesive paper for durability. Place a strip of magnetic tape on the back of each animal.
- Show the animals to the children and involve them in naming them. Point out some special features of the animals.
- Attach the animals to the back of a magnetic board or metal cookie sheet.
- Begin to sing "Old Macdonald had a Farm" with the children.
- Slowly expose part of the animal from behind the board as you sing "...and on that farm he had a _____."
- Encourage the children to identify the animal as soon as they can.
- Place the animal on the front of the board once it is identified.
- Repeat the process until all of the animals are on the front of the board.

Extensions:

- Point to one of the animals after they have all been placed on the board and invite children to join you in making the sound of that animal.
- Read the book, *Spots, Feathers and Curly Tails*, by Nancy Tafuri before involving children in this experience.

**Benchmarks: 4.3.C Responds to verbal and non-verbal communication
4.4.C Communicates through language**

Planned Experience: Farm Animal Cube (YT & OT)

Materials: empty cube shaped tissue box, newspaper pages, colored paper, self-adhesive paper, farm animals (See Attachment: [Farm Animal Cube](#))

How to begin:

- Make a Farm Animal Cube as follows:
 - Carefully fill an empty cube shaped tissue box with crumpled newspapers. Use several sheets because this will make your cube more durable.
 - Cover the cube with self-adhesive paper.
 - Glue a different farm animal picture on each side of the cube.
- Invite a child to toss the cube and name the animal that shows on the top of the cube.
- Continue with each child having a turn to toss the cube.

Extension:

- Invite children to join you in making the sound of each animal that shows on the top of the cube.

Note: *If you do not think that children can toss the cube, you toss it, and ask a child to say the name of the animal.*

Note: *Choose the animals you think your children will be most interested in or make two different cubes with the patterns provided.*

Benchmark: 4.4.C Communicates through language

Planned Experience: Coffee Can Barn (YT & OT)

Materials: coffee can with lid, (for a metal can use red spray paint, lead free), craft knife, farm animal pictures that have been laminated or covered with clear, self-adhesive for durability

How to begin:

- Prepare coffee can barn out of child's presence. Spray the can with red paint and use a craft knife to cut a four-inch diameter circle in the can lid.
- Allow the paint to dry before using the can with children.
- Place farm animal pictures inside the can.
- Snap the lid onto the can.
- Invite one child at a time to reach inside the can and pull out a picture.
- Invite the child to tell you about the picture.
- Suggest that the child name the animal and/or make the animal sound.
- Allow each interested child a turn.
- Help each child be successful. For example, for some children you may have to supply the name of the animal and ask the child to show you the horse's ears.

Note: *Prepare the can out of the presence of children. Store the craft knife in a locked cabinet out of reach of the children.*

Note: *Consider using an oatmeal box or paint a shoe box to look like a barn. Cut a door on the side so a child can reach in and pull out pictures if a coffee can is not available.*



**Self, Social
and
Emotional
Experiences**

Benchmarks: 1.2.C Becomes aware of self as a unique individual
1.3.C Demonstrates increasing sense of competence and confidence in growing abilities
1.4.C Asserts independence

Planned Experience: Who Did You See? (YT & OT)

Materials: individual pictures of each child, magnetic tape, figure of a child, magnetic board

How to begin:

- Place a strip of magnetic tape on the back of each child's picture and on the back of the figure of a child.
- Place the figure of the child on the board and say the following rhyme:

I went walking,
Who did you see?

- Place one of the children's pictures on the board and invite children to say child's name.
- Repeat the rhyme, using the child's name as follows:

I went walking,
Who did you see?
I saw Amy looking at me.

- Remove Amy's picture from the board and repeat the experience with pictures of each child in the group.
- Place all of the pictures on the board and say:

I went walking,
Who did you see?
I saw Amy, Brienna, Josh, and Jennifer (point to each picture in turn)
Looking at me.

Extension:

- Repeat with or substitute animal pictures if pictures of children are not available.
- Invite each child to select an animal picture. Say the following verse and invite child to place animal picture on the board::

Amy went walking
What did she see?
Amy saw a red cow and said,
"That red cow is looking at me."

- Continue with this experience, allowing each child a turn to put an animal picture on the board.



**Sensory
and Art
Materials
and
Experiences**

**Benchmarks: 5.2.C Develops fine motor skills
6.3.C Develops strategies for solving problems**

Planned Experience: Animals in the Hay (YT & OT)

Materials: clean hay and vinyl farm animals

How to begin:

- Place clean hay in a container such as a dish pan.
- Hide small farm animals in the hay.
- Place the container on a low table.
- Observe children as they play in the hay. Do they discover the animals?
- Invite children to tell you the name of the animals they find in the hay.

Note: *Be sure to check for allergies before using hay/straw*

**Benchmarks: 3.3.C Demonstrates caring and cooperation
5.1.C Develops gross motor skills
5.2.C Develops fine motor skills
5.3.C Coordinates eye and hand movements**

Planned Experience: Painting the Big Barn Red (YT & OT)

Materials: large cardboard box, red washable tempera paint, large paintbrushes, newspaper, craft knife (adult use only)

How to begin:

- Place the cardboard box on newspaper to protect the floor, or paint the box outdoors and place the newspaper on the ground or other surface.
- Provide paint in four containers large enough for children to dip large brushes into them.
- Place a container of paint on all four sides of the box.
- Place paint smocks on children.
- Invite children to help paint the big barn.
- Allow the paint to dry.
- Use a craft knife to cut out doors and windows.
- Place the barn in either the pretend play or block area or take it outdoors.

Extension:

- Provide several sizes of smaller boxes, red tempera and small brushes.
- Place the boxes on newspaper to protect the floor.
- Invite children to help paint the small barns.
- Allow the paint to dry.
- Use a craft knife out of presence of children to cut out doors and windows.
- Place the barns in either the pretend play or block area.
- Add small animals to the area.

Note: *Use the craft knife out of presence of children. Store it in a locked cabinet out of reach of children.*

Note: *Provide paint aprons, shirts or smocks to protect the clothing of the children.*



**Food /
Nutrition
Experiences**

Benchmark: 1.3.C Demonstrates increasing sense of competence and confidence in growing abilities

Planned Experience: Purple Cow (YT & OT)

Materials: grape juice in a plastic jar or small plastic pitcher, frozen vanilla yogurt, cups and spoons for each child, napkins

How to begin:

- Gather grape juice, yogurt, and cups, spoons, and napkins for each child.
- Invite children to sit at the table and say with them the poem that is written below.
- Explain to children that they will now make a “purple cow” for snack.
- Help each child add ¼ cup of frozen yogurt into a cup and pour ¼ cup grape juice on top.
- Eat with a spoon and enjoy.

Purple Cow

I've never seen a purple cow,
I never hope to see one.
But if by chance I ever do,
I'd rather see than be one.

Note: Allow the children to do as much of this food experience as possible.

Note: Use aprons, shirts, or smocks to protect clothing of children from grape juice.

Note: Caregivers and children should always wash hands before participating in a food experience



**Movement,
Music and
Gross
Motor
Experiences**

Benchmark: 5.1.C Develops gross motor skills

Planned Experience: Barn Dance (YT & OT)

Materials: CD or tape with barn dance, hoe down, or country swing tune such as “Turkey in the Straw”

How to begin:

- Begin to play the music and move to the rhythm in an area that allows for safe movement by the children in the group.
- Invite children to join you as you move to the music together.



**Transition
Times**

Name the Animal

- Toss the Farm Animal Cube and invite a child to name the animal on the top of the cube.
- Invite older toddlers to also make the animal sounds.
- Transition that child to the next experience.
- Continue with each child until all children have transitioned to the next experience.

Animals in the Barn

- Use the coffee can barn and animals for this transition.
- Invite each child to reach into the can, pull out an animal, name it, and transition to the

	<p>next experience.</p> <p>Note: <i>Adapt other finger plays previously listed as transitions to move children from one activity or place to another.</i></p>
 <p><u>Family Experiences</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send home a list of some of the books about animals on the farm. Suggest that families visit their local library and check out one or more of the books. • Suggest that families read the books with their child and encourage their child to name the animals and make the animal sounds. • Invite families who live on a farm to bring in pictures of their barn and animals to share with the children. • Suggest that families point out to their children farm animals they see as they are out driving.