



Big Ideas

Here are some big ideas about farm animals that you can help toddlers explore:

- Pigs, sheep and goats live on a farm.
- Pigs, sheep and goats are medium size animals.
- Lambs are small sheep.



Materials to Collect and Make

Featured Books

Tomie's Three Bears and Other Tales by Tomie dePaola (BB)
Mary had a Little Lamb as told and illustrated by Iza Trapani (+BB)
Ask Mr. Bear by Marjorie Flack

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 book, [The Three Little Pigs](#) (A Story a Month)
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, [Ask Mr. Bear](#) (A Story a Month)
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the book, [The Three Billy Goats Gruff](#) (A Story a Month)
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the Mother Goose Rhyme, "[Little Boy Blue](#)"
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the Mother Goose Rhyme, "[Baa, Baa, Black Sheep](#)"
- Storytelling figures (felt or magnetic) for the Mother Goose Rhyme, "Little Bo Peep"
- Illustrated Mother Goose Rhyme chart for "[Little Boy Blue](#)"
- Illustrated Mother Goose Rhyme chart for "[Baa, Baa, Black Sheep](#)"
- Illustrated Mother Goose Rhyme chart for "[Little Bo Peep](#)"

Additional Materials

- Vinyl farm animals (washable)
- Cardboard brick blocks (purchased or made) (See Attachment: [Brick Pattern](#))
- Small hay bales
- Hay/straw or clean sand
- Bundles of sticks
- Cotton balls
- Containers such as small butter tubs and measuring cups
- Small dish pan and scoops
- Tongs (ice)



Book List

*Featured Books

**Tomie's Three Bears and Other Tales* by Tomie dePaola (BB)

**Mary had a Little Lamb* as told and illustrated by Iza Trapani (+BB)

* *Ask Mr. Bear* by Marjorie Flack

Barnyard Banter by Denise Fleming

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

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

The Everything Book by Denise Fleming

I Went Walking by Sue Williams, illustrated by Julie Vivas

Old Macdonald Had a Farm illustrated by Pam Adams

Spots, Feathers, and Curly Tails by Nancy Tafuri

This is the Farmer by Nancy Tafuri

This Little Piggy illustrated by Annie Kubler

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

Book: *Tomie's Three Bears and Other Tales*
(includes *The Three Little Pigs*) by Tomie dePaola (YT & OT)

First Reading of *The Three Little Pigs*

- Place cardboard brick blocks in a container and take to the book area.
- Invite children to play with the blocks.
- Show book and say to children, "We're going to read a story about pigs. One of the pigs built his house with bricks like these brick blocks."
- Invite children to return the blocks to the container. Explain to them that they can play with the blocks in the block area.
- Show the picture of the mother and the three pigs and give the title of the story.
- Read the story with the children and invite them to make comments about the story and the pictures.
- Follow up the reading of the story by showing the pages where the pig is building his house with bricks and the completed house. Say to children, "The little pig built his house of bricks and the wolf couldn't blow it in."

Note: *If purchased cardboard brick blocks are not available, make brick blocks for children to use for building.*

Directions for Brick Block (See Attachment: [Brick Pattern](#))

- Copy Brick Pattern on red paper or red construction paper (cut to 8 ½ x 11).
- Wrap red brick paper around unit blocks or small boxes and secure with clear tape.

Second Reading of *The Three Little Pigs*

- Place in a container a cardboard brick block, a small bundle of straw/hay, and a bundle of small sticks or twigs.
- Take the container to the book area, keeping it out of sight until the appropriate time in the story.
- Say to children, "I'm going to read a story about three little pigs who built their houses.
- State the title and begin to read the story.
- Show the bundle of straw/hay when the pig wants to build a house made of straw and say, "This is straw. I wonder if the wolf can blow in this house of straw. Let's read and find out."
- Read the two pages about the house of straw and say, "Yes, the wolf did blow in the house made of straw."
- Continue reading and showing the building materials (sticks and brick). Invite children to predict if the wolf can block in a house made of sticks, then of bricks.
- Follow up the reading by showing each of the three building materials and asking the children if the wolf blew in the house made of each.
- Explain to children that the bricks, straw and sticks will be in block area.

Extension:

- Follow up the second and additional readings by inviting children to join you when you read "Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin" as well as "I'll huff and I'll puff" and the huffing and puffing.

Note: *Small hay bales can be purchased at a craft store. Create bundles of sticks by taping together a few twigs or small sticks (3 to 4 inches long). Make sure the twigs and sticks have no sharp ends. (Be sure to check for allergies before using hay/straw)*

Note: *Other versions of The Three Little Pigs may be too long and too violent for toddlers. If you do use the longer and more violent versions of the story, consider telling rather than reading the story and avoid having the wolf eat the pigs and the pigs boiling and eating the wolf.*

Note: *The previous note can also be applied to some versions of The Three Billy Goats Gruff.*

Book: *Mary had a Little Lamb* as told and illustrated by Iza Trapani

First Reading of *Mary had a Little Lamb* (YT & OT)

- Begin to sing the rhyme, "Mary had a Little Lamb" as you go to the book area.

Mary had a little lamb,
Little lamb, Little lamb.
Mary had a little lamb,
Its fleece was white as snow.

- Explain to children who join you in the book area that you will read a story about a little girl and her lamb.
- Show the cover and say, "This little girl's name is Mary and this is her little lamb. A lamb is a small sheep."

- Begin to read the story with the children.
- Invite the children to look at the pictures and talk about the animals they see.
- Follow up the reading by showing the pages and inviting children to name the animals they see.

Second Reading of *Mary had a Little Lamb*

- Take a tub of cotton balls to the book area, keeping it out of sight of children.
- Begin to sing the song, “Mary had a Little Lamb” as children join you.
- Show the cover and give the title.
- Read the story with the children.
- Follow up the reading by showing each page and inviting children to describe what is happening.

Extension:

- Show the children the tub of cotton balls and invite them to take a handful. Say, “These cotton balls are white like the fleece on Mary’s little lamb. Feel how soft the cotton balls are. They’re soft like the fleece on Mary’s lamb.”
- Show the first page of the book so that children can see the soft white fleece of the lamb.
- Create a large outline of a lamb on a sheet of paper. Cover the lamb with cotton balls and invite children to feel the softness of the cotton balls. Say, “This is soft like the white fleece on Mary’s lamb.”

Note: *The lamb outline is **NOT** to be used as a craft project for toddlers.*

Book: *Ask Mr. Bear* by Marjorie Flack

First Reading of *Ask Mr. Bear* (YT & OT)

- Place a collection of vinyl farm animals in a container. Include the available animals that are featured in the book.
- Take the container to the book area and say, “I have farm animals in this basket. We’re going to read a book about some of them.”
- Invite children who join you to play with the animals. Listen to their comments and expand on what they say or ask questions for clarification. For example, say, “Francesca, that does look like a sheep, but it’s a goat. This is a sheep.”
- Collect animals and explain to children that they will be able to play with the animals in the block area.
- Show cover and say to children, “This little boy’s name is Danny. Can you name the animals with Danny?”
- Give the title of the book and begin to read the story. Invite children’s comments.
- Follow up the reading by asking children if they have ever given anyone a big bear hug: Who was it? Was that person happy to get the bear hug? Did they ever receive a big bear hug? How did it make them feel?

Second Reading of *Ask Mr. Bear*

- Invite children to join you to hear the story, *Ask Mr. Bear*.
- Show the cover and give the title.
- Read the story with the children.
- Follow up the reading by showing the page where Danny meets the hen. Ask the children, “Who was the first animal that Danny met?” Continue by showing pages where Danny meets each animal and ask children, “Who was the next animal that Danny met?” until children have identified all of the animals.

	<p>Extension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show the page with the full view of all of the animals and invite children to name them. • Ask children if they can show you the biggest animal on the page (cow)...the smallest animal (hen). Say that the goat and sheep are medium size animals. • Continue with this same page by asking children what each animal said when Danny said, "Let's go and ask Mr. Bear." "What did the hen say...the goose...the goat...the sheep?" • Ask children why they think all of the animals said "no" and did not want to go and see Mr. Bear. <p>Additional Benchmark: 6.1.C Gains an understanding of basic concepts and relationships</p>
 <p><u>Language and Cognitive Materials and Experiences</u></p>	<p>Benchmark: 4.5.C Shows enjoyment of books and stories</p> <p>Planned Experience: Storytelling (YT & OT) <u>The Three Little Pigs</u> <u>Ask Mr. Bear</u> <u>The Three Billy Goats Gruff</u></p> <p>How to begin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make either felt or magnetic storytelling figures for the story. • Read the book 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. <p>Retelling of <i>The Three Billy Goats Gruff</i></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><i>Once upon a time there were three Billy Goats. Their name was Gruff. One day the Billy Goats Gruff decided they wanted to go to the meadow across the river where there was lots of grass and daisies for them to eat. But they had to cross a bridge to get to the other side of the river, and under that bridge was an ugly old troll who was also very mean.</i></p> <p><i>The Billy Goats were really hungry, so the youngest Billy Goat Gruff decided he would cross the bridge. "Trip, Trap, Trip, Trap" went the bridge as the youngest Billy Goat Gruff started across the bridge.</i></p> <p><i>"Who is that tripping over my bridge?" roared the ugly and mean old troll.</i></p> <p><i>In a small voice, the youngest Billy Goat Gruff said, "It is only I, the tiniest Billy Goat Gruff and I'm going on the other side of the river to eat some grass."</i></p> <p><i>"Oh, no you're not!" roared the ugly and mean old troll, "because I'm going to gobble you up."</i></p> <p><i>"Oh, please don't gobble me up because I'm too little" said the youngest Billy Goat Gruff. "Wait until the second Billy Goat Gruff comes. He's much bigger than I am."</i></p> <p><i>"Be off with you then" replied the ugly, mean old troll.</i></p> <p><i>The second Billy Goat Gruff decided he would cross the bridge. "Trip, Trap, Trip, Trap, Trip, Trap" went the bridge as the second Billy Goat Gruff started across the bridge.</i></p> </div>

“Who is that tripping over my bridge?” roared the ugly and mean old troll.

In a voice not quite so small, the second Billy Goat Gruff said, “It is only I, the second Billy Goat Gruff and I’m going on the other side of the river to eat some grass.”

Oh, no you’re not!” roared the ugly and mean old troll, “because I’m going to gobble you up.”

“Oh, please don’t gobble me up Wait until the third Billy Goat Gruff comes. He’s much bigger than I am.”

“Be off with you then” replied the ugly, mean old troll.

The third Billy Goat Gruff decided he would cross the bridge. “TRIP, TRAP, TRIP, TRAP, TRIP, TRAP, TRIP, TRIP, TRAP” went the bridge as the third Billy Goat Gruff started across the bridge.

“Who is that tripping over my bridge?” roared the ugly and mean old troll.

In a really loud voice the third Billy Goat Gruff said, “It is I, the big Billy Goat Gruff.”

“I’m coming to gobble you up” roared the ugly and mean old troll. When the troll climbed to the bridge, the big Billy Goat Gruff pushed him into the water with his big horns, then joined his two brothers in the meadow and they all ate grass and got fat.

The ugly and mean old troll never bothered the three Billy Goats Gruff again.

Note: Vary your voice level and tone for each of the three Billy Goats Gruff and for the troll.

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

Planned Experience: Storytelling (YT & OT)

Mother Goose Rhyme, “[Baa Baa Black Sheep](#)”

Mother Goose Rhyme, “[Little Bo Peep](#)”

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

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)

“[Baa Baa Black Sheep](#)”

“[Little Bo Peep](#)”

“[Little Boy Blue](#)”

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.

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

Planned Experience: This Little Piggie (YT & OT)

Materials: Mother Goose Rhyme Book

How to begin:

- Show the picture in the rhyme book as you say the rhyme with the children.

This Little Piggie

This little piggie went to market,
This little piggie stated at home.
This little piggie had roast beef,
This little piggie had none,
And this little piggie cried,
Wee-wee-wee-wee-wee,
All the way home.

- Repeat the rhyme with the children.
- Invite them to say "Wee-wee-wee-wee-wee" with you.

Benchmark: 4.4.C Communicates through language

A Little Girl Went Walking

A little girl went walking
One lovely summer day.
She saw a big fat dancing pig.
"Oink, oink, oink" the pig did say.

A little girl went walking
One lovely summer day.
She saw a white and fluffy sheep.
"Baa, baa, baa" the sheep did say.

A little girl went walking
One lovely summer day.
She saw a happy billy goat.
"Maa, maa, maa" the goat did say.

All Around the Farm

(Sing to tune of "Wheels on the Bus")

The sheep on the farm go "baa, baa, baa"

"Baa, baa, baa"

"Baa, baa, baa."

The sheep on the farm go "baa, baa, baa"

All round the farm.

The goats on the farm go "maa, maa, maa"

"Maa, maa, maa"

"Maa, maa, maa."

The goats on the farm go "maa, maa, maa"

All round the farm.

The pigs on the farm go "oink, oink, oink"

"Oink, oink, oink"

"Oink, oink, oink."

The pigs on the farm go "oink, oink, oink"

All around the farm.

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.*



**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**

Planned Experience: Who Had a Little Lamb? (YT & OT)

Materials: magnetic or felt lambs (one per child and one for you), magnetic or felt board, container for lambs

How to begin:

- Place a lamb on the storyboard and begin to say or sing the following rhyme:

Mary Had a Little Lamb

Mary had a little lamb,
Little lamb, little lamb.
Mary had a little lamb.
Its fleece was white as snow.

- Invite each child, one at a time, to select a lamb from the container and place his or her lamb on the board as you sing the rhyme with that child's name as follows:

Emily had a little lamb,
Little lamb, little lamb.
Emily had a little lamb.
Its fleece was white as snow.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude the experience by saying, “Everyone had a little lamb” and say each child’s name.
 <p><u>Sensory and Art Materials and Experiences</u></p>	<p>Benchmarks: 5.2.C Develops fine motor skills 6.1.C Gains an understanding of basic concepts and relationships 6.2.C Applies knowledge to new situations 6.3.C Develops strategies for solving problems</p> <p>Planned Experience: Wash the Animals (YT & OT)</p> <p>Materials: small container such as a dish pan or a water table, 3 or 4 vinyl farm animals, sponges, small towel</p> <p>How to begin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place the animals and the sponges on the table beside the water play container. Observe to see if children place the animals in the tub and begin to wash them with the sponges. If not, say, “I see some really dirty animals that need a bath.” Take a small towel to the area and say, “I think we need a towel to dry off the animals, just like you dry off after your bath.” Comment on what children are doing. For example, “Nikki, you’re washing the pig.” “Samuel, you’re drying off the cow.” <p>Note: <i>Limit the number of children in the water play area. Provide one sponge per child in the area.</i></p> <p>Note: <i>Have children wash and dry hands before and after playing in the water play area.</i></p> <p>Note: <i>Pour out the water and sanitize the container after the water play experience.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Benchmarks: 5.2.C Develops fine motor skills 6.1.C Gains an understanding of basic concepts and relationships</p> <p>Planned Experience: Soft Cotton Balls (YT & OT)</p> <p>Materials: cotton balls, container such as a small dish pan, scoops, measuring cups, tongs</p> <p>How to begin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place cotton balls in a container and place the container on a low table. Set the utensils on the table next to the container. Observe children as they explore and experiment with the cotton and the utensils. Make comments such as, “That cotton is really soft. It’s kind of like lamb’s fleece.” <hr/> <p>Benchmarks: 5.1.C Develops fine motor skills 6.3.C Develops strategies for solving problems</p> <p>Planned Experience: Find the Animals (YT & OT)</p> <p>Materials: clean sand, container such as a small dish pan, small farm animals</p> <p>Hot to begin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place about three inches of clean sand in a container. Hide four or five small farm animals in the sand. Place the container on a low table. Observe a child who is playing in the sand. If the child finds the animals, invite the child to tell you about the experience. Respond to what they tell you. For example, if a

	<p>child shows you a pig and says, “Pig,” say, “Isabella, you found a pig buried in the sand. I wonder if there is another animal in the sand.”</p> <p>Extension: Consider substituting clean hay/straw or wood shavings for small animal cages for the sand. (Be sure to check for allergies before using hay/straw)</p>
 <p><u>Movement, Music and Gross Motor Experiences</u></p>	<p>Benchmark: 5.1.C Develops gross motor skills</p> <p>Planned Experience: Trip, Trap, Trip, Trap</p> <p>Materials: Storytelling figures for The Three Billy Goats Gruff, storyboard</p> <p>How to begin:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the storytelling figures to present the story, <i>The Three Billy Goats Gruff</i>, to the children. • Invite them to say “Trip, trap, trip, trap” with you, using a soft, medium and loud voice. • Involve children in walking in place as you say, “Trip, trap, trip, trap” in first a soft, then medium, then loud voice. Model walking in place softly, then with a medium step, then stomping. • Invite children to follow you as you march around the room like the tiniest Billy Goat Gruff, then like the middle size Billy Goat Gruff, then like the big Billy Goat Gruff. • Use a large piece of cardboard or masking tape to make a bridge to march over.
 <p><u>Transition Times</u></p>	<p>Give a Bear Hug</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say to children, “I’m going to give each of you a bear hug as you go to (insert the appropriate transition here.)” <p>Name the Farm Animal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place a collection of small vinyl farm animals in a feely bag or box. • Invite each child to reach into the bag, pull out an animal, name it, and transition to the next experience. <p>Let’s Trip Trap to the Playground</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve children in going to the playground, for example, like one of the Billy Goats Gruff. • Say, “We’re going to be the tiniest Billy Goat Gruff as we Trip, Trap to the playground. • Say, “Trip, Trap, Trip, Trap” in a soft voice and walk quietly to the playground. <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>	<p>Here are some way to involve families in this toddler topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask families to collect and bring to you pictures of farm animals. Give them a list of the animals that the children will be learning about. If any of your families have a farm, ask them to take pictures of some of their animals to share with the children. • Send home a list of some of the books about farm animals. Suggest that families visit their local library, check out some of the books, and read them with their child.