Dear Zoo
Rod Campbell

Play is the most powerful way babies and toddlers learn.
Every time you play, sing or read with babies and toddlers they are learning about language.
The following activities have been designed for early childhood professionals to use
as a starting point for developing children’s early literacy skills through play.
Please feel free to adapt them for the home and with children of different ages.
Don’t forget to record your own ideas, activities that worked really well, relevant
songs and rhymes in the Notes section opposite.
Visit our website www.thelittlebigbookclub.com for more fun printable activities
based on this book.

Engaging with Language and Literacy

Reading aloud with your baby stimulates their developing senses and builds
listening and memory skills.

- Before starting the story gather a collection of toy animals from the story.
  Let the baby/child hold a toy animal from the story such as an elephant or
  monkey.

- When reading the story with toddlers encourage them to match the toy
  animals with the pictures in the story.

- Emphasise the animal’s sounds and use actions such as swinging your
  arm upwards for the trunk of an elephant.

- With toddlers draw attention to the writing on the boxes. You can ask
  questions like “I wonder what can be in this box - it says danger.”

- With young children you can create a sense of anticipation by opening the
  flap slowly or opening and closing the flap quickly. You could include
  animal sounds as you are lifting the flap. Creating a sense of excitement
  will bring the book to life.

- Try retelling the story using finger puppets, if you do not have all the
  animals from the story you can improvise and use you own words.

Discovering Sensory Play

There are many fun ways you can make the zoo come to life for babies and
small children.

- Create a zoo collage by drawing an outline of the various animals and
  encourage the children to decorate the animal shapes using a variety of
  materials for example faux furs, crepe paper, cotton wool and feathers.

- Make homes for the toy animals out of shoeboxes. The animals can be
  displayed in shoeboxes with cage doors made from pop sticks that the
  children can open and close.

For more book suggestions, information and activity sheets visit www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au
• Try including plastic zoo animals with the play dough so the children can create their own zoo scene.

• You may also like to include plastic zoo animals in a sand or water tray.

• The children can make their own animal faces uses bread and a variety of toppings such as grated carrot, sultanas and cream cheese.

Exploring Our World

• Create a zoo collage by drawing an outline of the various animals and encourage the children to decorate the animal shapes using a variety of materials for example faux furs, crepe paper, cotton wool and feathers.

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• Try including plastic zoo animals with the play dough so the children can create their own zoo scene.

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Enjoying Music and Movement

• The children can play a game of pin the tail on the elephant/giraffe/camel/lion.

• Use a variety of music, both fast and slow, so the children can move like the zoo animals stomping like elephants, hopping like frogs or slithering like snakes.

• Change the words from Old McDonald had a farm to Old McDonald had a zoo and at that zoo he had a …

• You can play a game of Freddie the Frog. This can be done in a small group, sitting or standing. Put a box in the center of a small circle of children. Give one child the beanbag. Everyone chants:

  Freddie the Frog went to jump on a log
  And, SPLASH, he fell into the pond.
On the word “SPLASH”, the child throws the beanbag into the box in the center of the circle. Keep repeating until everyone has a turn with the beanbag.

- Sing songs and finger rhymes about the animals in the story such as One Grey Elephant Balancing, Leo the Lion, Alice the Camel, Three Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed, Galoomp.

One grey elephant balancing
One grey elephant balancing
Step by step on a piece of string
Thought it was such a wonderful stunt
That he called for another elephant

Leo the lion
Leo the Lion
Is the king of the jungle
His jaws are open wide!
Roar!
Leo the Lion
When he roars, it's a warning
That you better run away and hide!

Alice the Camel
Alice the camel has five humps.
Alice the camel has five humps.
Alice the camel has five humps.
So go, Alice, go.

Alice the camel has four humps.
Alice the camel has four humps.
Alice the camel has four humps.
So go, Alice, go.

Alice the camel has three humps.
Alice the camel has three humps.
Alice the camel has three humps.
So go, Alice, go.

Alice the camel has two humps.
Alice the camel has two humps.
Alice the camel has two humps.
So go, Alice, go.

Alice the camel has one hump.
Alice the camel has one hump.
Alice the camel has one hump.
So go, Alice, go.

Alice the camel has no humps.
Alice the camel has no humps.
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Alice the camel has no humps.
Now Alice is a horse.

Three little monkeys jumping on the bed
Three little monkeys jumping on the bed,
One fell off and bumped his head.
Mama called the Doctor and the Doctor said,  
"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!"

Two little monkeys jumping on the bed,
One fell off and bumped her head.
Papa called the Doctor and the Doctor said,
"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!"

One little monkey jumping on the bed,
He fell off and bumped his head.
Mama called the Doctor and the Doctor said,
"Put those monkeys straight to bed!"

Galoomp
Galoomp went the little green frog one day,
Galoomp went the little green frog,
Galoomp went the little green frog one day,
And his eyes went gloomp, gloomp, gloomp.

But:
We all know frogs go
Lah dee dah dee dah,
Lah dee dah dee dah,
Lah dee dah dee dah,

We all know frogs go
Lah dee dah dee dah,
They don't go gloomp, gloomp, gloomp.

More Books By Rod Campbell:
Oh Dear
It's Mine
Noisy Farm
Farm 1 2 3
ABC Zoo
Farm Babies
I'm Hungry

Useful websites:
For printable activities:
www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au
http://www.rodcampbell.co.uk/