

**Play is the most powerful way young children learn.**

- Every time you play, sing or read with young children 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](http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com) for more fun printable activities based on this book.

**Engaging with Language and Literacy**

*Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.*

Emilie Buchwald

When reading the story:

- Introduce the story by saying the title Baby and then repeating the word in a sentence. Can you see the baby elephant? Look at the baby elephant.
- Repeat and build on what your child or children say. For example, if s/he says, 'Baby,' you can say, 'Yes look at the baby. Do you like the baby? Let's read about the baby together'.
- When reading the story highlight the various members of the baby elephant's family. You could ask questions such as does your mum get a snack for you when you get hungry?

After reading the story:

- Make elephant finger puppets or puppets on pop sticks to retell the story. Younger children will enjoy the opportunity to hold the elephant puppets during the story.
- Display pictures of families around the room. This could include small families, large families and animal families.
- Ask the parents or carers to bring in a family photo. The photos can be used to make a book with key phrases like names of the family members. Alternatively you could display the family photos in the room at children's eye level.



## Baby

Tania Cox & Ann James

**In their first 12 months, babies develop many of the foundations that underpin speech and language development.**

### Notes

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**Discovering Sensory Play**

- The children may like to bath dolls with the water play or you could include some plastic elephants or other animals in the water trough.
- Think about putting plastic animals including elephants with play dough or clay. You may like to re-enact the story using your own words, for example, “Oh no! The baby is stuck in the mud. Here comes her brother to pull her out of the mud!”

**Exploring Our World**

- Find pictures of animal mothers and babies. Encourage the children to match the pictures of the mothers to their babies.
- Using various sized pictures or cut outs of elephants you can discuss the concept of big and small. Some older children may be able to help sort smallest to biggest.

**Enjoying Music and Movement**

- Grey socks or tights make great elephant trunks and can be stuffed with newspaper for the children to use as trunks.
- Play a game of *Five Grey Elephants Balancing*. You could include the elephant trunks (see above) in the game.
- The *Baby Elephant Walk* by Henry Mancini is a great piece of music for the children to move to. They can practice swinging their trunks and running just like Baby in the story. Several versions of the song are available on YouTube.
- Sing familiar lullabies with children such as *Hush Little Baby* and *Rock A Bye Baby*.

Five grey elephants

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

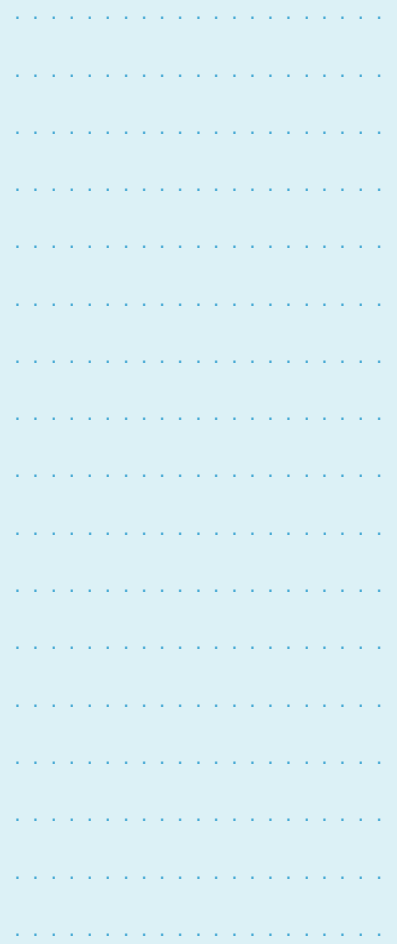
**More Books About Families**

- Time For Bed* by Mem Fox  
*Hush Hush, Kiss Kiss and Little Humpty* by Margaret Wild  
*The Family Book* by Todd Parr  
*Farm Babies* by Rod Campbell

**Useful websites:**

For printable activities:

[www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au](http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au)



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

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

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

Five grey elephants balancing  
Step by step on a piece of string  
All of a sudden the piece of string broke  
And down came all the elephant folk

Hush little baby

Hush, little baby, don't say a word.  
Mama's gonna buy you a mockingbird

And if that mockingbird won't sing,  
Mama's gonna buy you a diamond ring

And if that diamond ring turns brass,  
Mama's gonna buy you a looking glass

And if that looking glass gets broke,  
Mama's gonna buy you a billy goat

And if that billy goat won't pull,  
Mama's gonna buy you a cart and bull

And if that cart and bull turn over,  
Mama's going to buy you a dog named Rover.

And if that dog named Rover won't bark,  
Mama's going to buy you a horse and cart.

And if that horse and cart fall down,  
You'll still be the sweetest little baby in town.

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