



WEEK OF MARCH 16<sup>TH</sup>

# Not a Box



## This week's Play Material: Cardboard boxes

Ideal is one box per person, but even a single shared box will do. Got a box emergency? Take the bag of Cheerios out and, voila—a box!



### How to DIY

Aim to do the main activity together with kids to set the stage for the independent activities to follow. Need more for the week? Try one or more of the extension activities to inspire independent play or more co-play experiences for you and your child.

### Main Activity

**Enjoy with your child to set the stage for a week of play**

1. Head outside with your boxes and kiddos.
2. Stop and behold a box. Ask kids, "What is this?" Take answers.
3. Then, share, "The funny thing is, this is NOT a box." Pause. "That's right, this is definitely NOT a box."
4. Wonder, "What could our 'not-a-box' be?"
5. Demonstrate a few ideas. Put the box on your head and, you've got a hat. Hop in and start to row row row your boat. Tap with sticks, and you've got a drum.
6. Have fun using your bodies, imaginations and the objects around you to turn your not-a-box into endless new things.
7. No need to rush. Stay silly. Enjoy each new idea for as long as it wants to hang out, and keep rolling, letting new ideas find you.
8. *Optional:* [Listen to or watch](#) a reading of Not A Box



### Independent Extensions

**Set these up to inspire independent play or play together.**

#### Parent Prep

- **Got a knife?** Cut a few larger holes or windows/doors in your box to open up new possibilities.
- **Got a screwdriver?** Pre-poke holes in your box. These holes can become perfect ways to stuff or pass light, twigs, grasses, yarn/string, etc. through the box.

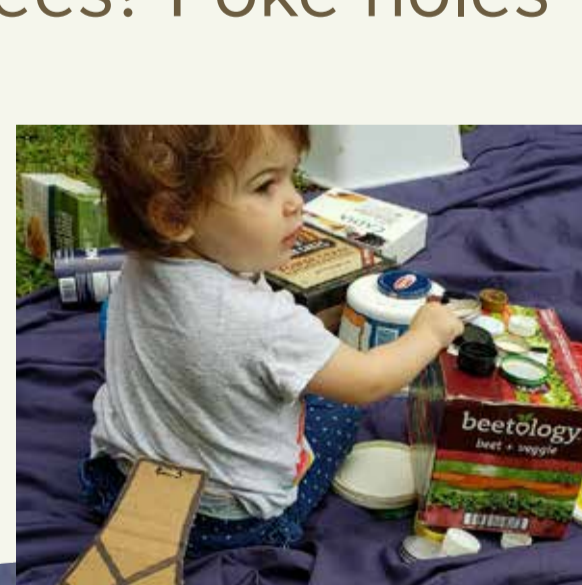


#### Babies/Toddlers

- **Got tape?** Leave one side of your box open, so babies can crawl in and out.
- **Got textures?** Tape or glue objects with different sensory textures (e.g. different types of cloth, feathers, leaves, grasses, edible herbs) on the inside and outside of the box for baby to explore. (Note: Older siblings may love setting this up for baby.)
- **Got balls or nature treasures (e.g. pine cones, sticks)?** Encourage baby/toddlers to pass them in and out of holes you've poked in your box.

#### Preschoolers and up

- **Got glue?** Help kids rub (glue stick), pour it or paint glue/water mixture on the side of the box, then stick on bits of paper, leaves, petals, grasses, and other nature treasures. (Remember, kids are washable).
- **Got tape?** Wrap tape around the box with the sticky side facing out. Gather fallen leaves, petals, and grasses to add to the outside of your box. What can it become now?
- **Got golf tees?** Poke starter holes in your box and welcome kids to push or tap tees into the sides of the box. Don't have tees? Poke holes and let kids stick twigs in the holes.
- **Got string or yarn?** Wrap or weave the string around your box, in and around the golf tees/sticks, or through holes you've made in your box.
- **Got rain?** See how rain sounds from under or inside your box. Watch what changes about your box as it gets wetter and wetter. What gets worse and what gets better? If it's really rainy, can you whip up a batch of box soup in a large pot? If you strain and dry out the box soup on a towel, what do you see the next day?
- **Play like Beavers!** Cut part of a box to make a beaver tail ([here's how](#)), then play like beavers as you use boxes, sticks, logs and other recycled materials to build like beavers. Imagine you are building a beaver den in an imaginary river. Learn more about beavers [here](#).



#### School Aged Kids

- **Got a favorite animal?** Imagine you are that critter and this box is your home. How can you make it cozier? Safer? Pop in and out as you find food to survive.
- **Got a favorite character?** Imagine this is your character's castle/lair/spaceship/etc. Decorate and play!
- **Big Orange Spot**—[Listen to the book online](#). Get out the paint and other materials and turn a box into the home of your dreams.

#### Share your experiences!

Share photos and stories of your experiences with box play and time outside this week using #tinkergarten and #outdoorsall4. Join and share in our free [#OutdoorsAll4 Facebook group](#), and we may just feature your photos in next week's email!