

ACTIVITIES TO ACCOMPANY
HERE A CHICK, WHERE A CHICK?

By Suse MacDonald

I. For children one to two years of age

- a. Play the old game of peek-a-boo with your child. Build on that experience by playing “Where’s the ____?” with a favorite doll or toy animal. Hide the toy behind your back or under a table or place a cloth over it. When your child has this concept firmly in place, graduate to the book.
- b. Before reading the book, call your child’s attention to the front cover. Point to each animal on the cover and name it. Then read the book, inviting your child to identify each animal.
- c. If your child has a toy farm set of animals, or a book of animals, point to each animal and say its name. You can also teach your child the sound each animal makes. When you read the book, have your child say the name of each animal as it is discovered. They can then compare Suse MacDonald’s rendition of each animal with the animals depicted in other books or in the farm set. In this way, your child will become familiar with the concept of “cowness” or “pigness”, even when they appear in different artistic versions.
- d. As you read the book repeated times, have your child identify each animal by making its sound.
- e. This book and others that your child especially enjoys, can be read over and over. An adult sometimes tires of a particular book, but children seldom do. A book becomes a familiar friend, giving security and comfort in its predictability. Repeated Reading is an important step to literacy. Long before the child is able to read, he/she is absorbing knowledge about books: that one goes page to page from front to back, that a story has a beginning, a middle and an end, and that characters in books often use vocabulary and a style of speaking that is different from everyday conversation.

II. For children three to four years of age.

- a. Use any or all of the activities above, based on each child’s level of maturity.
- b. Teach your child the old song, “Old MacDonald Had A Farm”, being sure to include verses for each of the animals depicted in this book.
- c. Once your child is very familiar with the book, you can vary your Repeated Readings by “singing the book”. Have your child point to each animal, and sing the appropriate MacDonald verse with them.
- d. Encourage your child to “read” the book to you, after becoming familiar with the content. Pretend Reading is another step towards “real” reading, but has nothing to do with actually decoding print. The child should use his/her own language and simply tell the story, guided by the pictures. They may, indeed, use the only words in the book, Here a chick, There a chick, but it is not necessary that they do so. This should be a game of imagination.
- e. Use the stick puppet activity. Templates and instructions are below, Figure 1.

HERE A CHICK, continued

III. For pre-school or kindergarten classes.

- a. Read through the activities above and adapt your favorites to a group situation. The “Old MacDonald” activity is especially well suited to a classroom setting.
- b. Either individually or in small groups, have students make their own flap books. Start with a base piece of construction paper. Cut another piece of construction paper into small rectangles. Glue or tape the small rectangle, only at its top end, to the base piece of paper. Bind or staple several sheets together as a book. The topic could be adding other animals to this story or it could be on any subject students choose.

Note: it may be unnecessary, but here you
could draw a large rectangle, with a
smaller rectangle inside, as a model.

- c. Dramatize the book. There are enough animals to ensure that all students can participate. Since each animal discovered joins in the search, it will end up as a big parade. If you are presenting this for an audience, the searchers should say, “Here a Chick, Where a Chick?” at each new search site. The performance could end with a rousing version of “Old MacDonald”.

IV. Extension Activities for all ages.

- a. Using a large piece of butcher paper, have the students make a barnyard mural. They could use poster paint, crayons, colored markers or collage.
- b. Make animal hand puppets from brown paper lunch bags. The children can decorate the bags with crayons, yarn, construction paper scraps, etc., Encourage dramatic play by asking 3 or 4 students to ad-lib a conversation between their animals.
- c. Play a Where’s the Chick game.
Inside version: One child is “IT” and wears the hen mask. The mask template is below, Figure 2. IT decides where the chicks will be hiding. The others then ask one question each, “Are the chicks in the _____?” (Must be a location inside the room). The person who correctly guesses the hiding location becomes the next IT.
Outside version: The questioners run to a location and ask, “Are the chicks here?” The adult in charge should set safe boundaries and keep all activity within them.
- d. Hands On Experience: If you do not live in a rural community, arrange a trip to a child-friendly farm. Some cities also have programs that will bring farm animals to your school. 4-H clubs might also welcome young visitors.

Activities by Mary Lou Meerson, Educational Consultant, San Diego

The *Here a-Chick Where a-Chick* Animals are cow, mouse, pig, duck, chick, & cat). Blow up images 150% on 11x17 heavy paper. Have the children color the animals and glue them onto point sticks. When reading the story, the children hold up the animal whose sound they are hearing.



CHICKEN MASK

Enlarge 150% and print on heavy paper.

Color & cut out the eyes and mask.

Lengthen the straps.

Attach the bugs to the mask with pipe cleaners.

