

We Skoolhouse



Ready-Made Curriculum: Light & Shadow Exploration



A Practical Guide for Exploration

Each unit offers a suggested flow of experiences designed to support deep, meaningful learning through play. You'll notice intentional repetition—this is purposeful. Repeating activities builds memory, mastery, confidence, attention, and focus, forming the foundation for long-term learning.

The experiences are open-ended & process-driven, focusing on how children learn rather than what they produce. This allows for a range of learning styles & encourages exploration at each child's unique pace.

Flexibility Matters

Each unit includes a suggested daily activity guide to support your planning—but it's not meant to be followed rigidly or completed in a set order:

- **Follow the children's lead:** If they're deeply engaged, slow down. If interest fades, it's okay to pause and return later. Some children need time to warm up to new ideas—don't move on too quickly. Repeating an invitation over several days can spark richer engagement.
- **Move at your own pace:** Stretch a week into two, repeat activities as long as needed, and allow units to grow over time.
- **Revisit, don't rush:** There's no need to introduce a new unit each month. Returning to a familiar concept—like revisiting water after exploring texture or paint—deepens understanding and strengthens memory. Revisiting isn't starting over—it's going further.

This guide is about making space for curiosity, experimentation, and meaningful learning. Use it as a springboard—trust yourself, trust the children, and allow learning to unfold naturally.



Unit: Light & Shadow Exploration

Light and shadows offer a visually stimulating experience for infants, helping them explore the concept of light sources & how objects interact with light. They discover movement of shadows, the play of light across surfaces, and the effects of changes in brightness & darkness, encouraging visual tracking & focus.

Domain	How It Supports Development
Physical	Encourages visual tracking and motor coordination as infants follow lights or reach toward shadows and reflections. Turning heads toward light sources builds neck and core strength.
Cognitive	Stimulates visual curiosity and early pattern recognition. Babies begin to make sense of cause and effect as they notice movement or light changes based on their actions or the environment.
Language	Provides rich language exposure when caregivers describe what the infant sees ("Look at the light," "That's your reflection"). These interactions support joint attention and early communication skills.
Social-Emotional	Promotes secure attachment through shared discovery experiences. Calming lights and mirrored interactions support emotional regulation and self-awareness (recognizing self in mirror).

Unit: Light & Shadow Exploration

Focus Materials: Flashlights, mirrors, sheer fabric, reflective surfaces

Books: Black on White by Tana Hoban, Light: Shadows, Mirrors, and Rainbows by Natalie M. Rosinsky

Songs: "You Are My Sunshine," and "This Little Light of Mine"

Vocabulary: Light, bright, dark, glow, shiny, mirror, shadow, lamp, sun, flashlight, spot, dim, beam, twinkle

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Mirrors & reflections	Flashlight tracking	Mirrors & reflections	Light Table Sensory Play	Flashlight tracking
Week 2	Flashlight tracking	Light Table Sensory Play	Light Table Sensory Play	Mirrors & reflections	Glow-in-the-dark sensory bottles
Week 3	Glow-in-the-dark sensory bottles	Mirrors & reflections	Flashlight tracking	Light Table Sensory Play	Glow-in-the-dark sensory bottles
Week 4	Glow-in-the-dark sensory bottles	Light Table Sensory Play	Mirrors & reflections	Flashlight tracking	Mirrors & reflections

Unit: Light & Shadow Exploration

Suggested Activities

- **Mirrors and reflection:** Babies gaze into baby-safe mirrors during play or tummy time, encouraging visual focus, self-awareness, and early social-emotional connection.
- **Flashlight tracking:** Use a soft-beam flashlight in a dim room to move light slowly across the floor or wall. Babies visually track the movement, building focus and eye coordination.
- **Light table sensory play:** Place translucent items (like colored cups, gel shapes, or tissue paper) on a light table for babies to explore. The glowing surface enhances visual contrast & invites gentle tactile play.
- **Glow-in-the-dark sensory bottle:** Fill a clear, sealed bottle with warm water, glow-in-the-dark paint or stars, glitter, and baby oil or hair gel. In a dark space, babies shake and watch it glow—encouraging visual tracking and sensory engagement.

Alternatives and Extensions:

Explore these simple variations to extend play, supporting repetition, variety, and deeper sensory learning:

- **Peek-a-boo with string lights:** Place warm string lights beneath a lightweight fabric allowing babies to gently lift and lower the fabric.
- **Shadow puppet play on the wall:** Use your hands or simple toy shapes to create shadows against a wall or sheet using a soft light. Babies track the movement and begin noticing contrast and motion.
- **Reflective mobiles near a window:** Create a mobile using baby-safe reflective items like foil, metallic paper, or shiny lids.

