

Tidy up time!

Equipment and resources

A large clear space with a safe ground or floor surface for movement. One practitioner to lead the game and more practitioners to support the children. CDs featuring favourite songs that are likely to inspire speed, movement and co-operation. A CD player. Toys and equipment that need to be tidied away – at the end of a free play session or group activity.

Activity

- * Explain to the children that tidying up is fun when everybody works together. Invite them to gather as a group in the centre of the play area and listen carefully.
- * Ask each child individually, by name, to perform a specific task. For example: Vicky – please put the books that are on the carpet back onto the shelves. Divide larger tasks between small groups of children, giving them each specific jobs. For example: Greg – please collect up all the engines and trucks and put them into the train set boxes. Tess – please put the track pieces into the train set boxes. Andy – please put the tunnels, stations and engine sheds into the train set boxes. Remind them of how to move and carry different toys and equipment carefully and safely, asking for help if it is needed.
- * Once all of the children have begun their allotted tasks, put on a favourite song and challenge them to complete their tidying up by the time the music ends. Practitioners should offer support to selected children as necessary to keep them on task and praise them all as they complete their objectives.
- * Choose a song or medley of songs that is long enough to provide just enough time to complete the tasks comfortably. Also point out the time on the wall clock and explain where

the hands will be when the song ends, as some children may be less familiar with the song but beginning to recognise the passing of time in this way.

- * Praise all of the children for completing the tasks they were given responsibility for.

Extensions

- * Play the game outdoors, encouraging children to run around and collect up physical play equipment, move wheeled vehicles to where they may be parked and fit toys into their outdoor storage areas.
- * Give a small group a collection of similar pieces that have been mixed up, such as a set of jigsaw puzzles or pens, pencils and crayons, and ask them to sort out the muddle. Suggest to each child that they collect the pieces for a different picture puzzle or a different type of pencil and put them away neatly.
- * Explain a tidying task to a pair or small group of children and encourage them to choose how to carry it out together, considering how they tidy up their own toys or equipment at home.

Learning objectives linked to Early Learning Goals

(See pages 8–13 for abbreviations.)

- * CL–LA: 5, 10
- * CL–U: 1, 9, 11
- * PSED–MR: 1, 4, 7
- * PSED–SCSA: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
- * PSED–MFB: 6
- * PD–MH: 3, 8
- * PD–HSC: 4, 5
- * EAD–EUMM: 2, 15
- * M–SSM: 14