

# Go Play

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A Guide for Creating **Easy, Interactive Hands-On Activities and Displays**  
for Bookstores and Libraries

## DECORATE ME Reading Nook

Kids love climbing into small spaces with a book! Invite children to decorate a nook inside the bookstore with stickers or recyclables.

- Provide one or more large cardboard boxes, large enough for a child to sit inside. Remove one side to make an inviting opening.
- Cushion or pillow for comfort
- Stickers!
- Optional - add paper towel rolls, small cardboard shapes, colored tape
- Bonus - add fairy lights to the “ceiling” of the reading nook for optimal coziness

## SENSORY BIN

A sensory bin is an interactive container filled with materials meant to inspire a child’s imagination by engaging their senses. **Sensory Bin: Bin + filler + tools**

### Bin ideas

- Shoe box
- Small plastic container
- An infant bathtub
- Large mixing bowl
- Inflatable baby pool

### Filler ideas

Since sensory bins encourage kids to scoop and pour, choose fillers that aren’t too difficult to tidy up.

#### Suggestions:

- Crinkle basket filler paper
- Large pompoms
- Fake flowers/leaves
- Cotton balls
- Dry noodles in interesting shapes (kids love “butterfly” or “bowtie” noodles)

### Tools

Check your local dollar store, thrift shop, or junk drawer for the following:

- Spoons – try different sizes!
- Measuring cups and spoons (plastic)
- Tongs and play tweezers
- Small wooden or plastic bowls



Bonus - you can dye or paint the noodles!  
Just make sure they’re completely dry before a child plays with them.

## PLEASE TOUCH Table

Children are told “NO” all day long, especially when in stores! Create a “yes space” by curating a table of items that encourage children to touch and play. Let your creativity run wild!

### Ideas:

- Fabric samples
- Faux fur
- Sequin fabric
- Sturdy zip-close bags filled with slime, hair gel, or kinetic sand (taped closed AND taped to the table to discourage opening the bag)
- Small cardboard squares with tactile designs made with a glue gun
- Lego, Magna-Tiles, or other construction play toys
- Nature items, like rocks, shells, leaves, etc.
- Take it a step further and cut large letters out of cardboard that spell out G-O P-L-A-Y, and glue/decorate each letter with tactilely interesting items such as fabric, buttons, stones, sand paper, or dried beans.
- Make sure everything is glued really well, and reattach if anything gets loose. You don't want children to put any of these items in their mouths.



## RIP and TEAR Art Station

Ripping paper is great for developing children's fine motor muscles! Encourage visitors to rip pieces of paper and glue/tape them to a large item to create a collaborative collage.

- Provide a large piece of cardboard, poster board, or canvas (bonus if it's a shape other than a rectangle or square).
- Provide a box or bin of construction paper and/or origami paper.
- Include a box or bin of glue sticks and tape (masking tape and painter's tape work best, but clear tape is okay, too).

**Post your play!**

Be sure to tag @BroadleafBooks and use hashtag **#GoPlayBook** to let us see your creations.