BIG DOG, LITTLE DOG

Young children have a natural love of learning. Reading with them is one of the best ways to feed their growing minds. Reading aloud to children helps them to develop listening and speaking skills and it promotes a special closeness between adults and children.

Theme/Concepts:
Young children love to compare and categorize objects. Big Dog...Little Dog by P. D. Eastman is a story about two dogs, Ted and Fred, who even though they are opposites in many ways are the best of friends. From house painting to driving, the author shows a variety of situations where children can compare the dogs’ differences. Through the book’s illustrations and simple language, children begin to understand that not everything is alike. Children learn the concept of opposites by comparing sizes, colors, and shapes.

Before Reading:
Tell children we are going to read a story about two dogs, Fred and Ted, who are good friends. Let’s read and see what they like to do together.

As you read: Stop at different places in the story and ask children “How are Big Dog and Little Dog the same? How are they different?”

After reading: Talk with children about the story. Ask questions like, “How were Ted and Fred alike? How were they different?” Have children demonstrate their understanding of the story with some of the following activities:

- **Favorite Part**: Encourage children to talk about their favorite part of the Big Dog...Little Dog story. Have them draw/write about their favorite part of the book. Be sure to have children talk about why they liked that part best.

- **Dog Shape Books**: Create shape books of Ted and Fred for each child. They can paste pictures of the each dog’s favorite things in their book.

- **Make a BIG and Small Book**: People are different sizes. Show children pictures of a baby with a mommy. The baby is little, the mommy is big. Compare hand sizes, foot sizes, height, fingers, toes, etc. You can do the same with baby animals and grown up animals (puppy/dog, kitten/cat...). Which is big? Small? Bigger? Smaller?

- **Create an Opposites Book**: Practice the concept of opposites. Fold several sheets of paper or cardstock to create the pages of the book. Some options are:
  - Children draw pairs of opposites from Big Dog...Little Dog on the inside pages.
  - Children can work in pairs or alone to draw pictures of opposites.
  - Paste pictures of opposites on the book pages.

MUSIC/MOVEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dog or Bone Shape Hop</th>
<th>Big and Little</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cut out large dog or bone shapes from colored paper. Laminate them and cut them out. Place them on the floor and ask children to hop from one shape to another. These may also be used as seat markers for group time.</td>
<td>This is big and this is little. This is big and this is little. Big, little, big, little, big, little, big little, This is big and this is little This is big and this is little Continue with tall, short, large/small</td>
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### MUSIC/MOVEMENT

**Dog, Dog, Cat**

A popular school yard game—Duck, Duck, Goose—can be turned into a dog- and cat-themed game. Children sit in a circle. One child starts out standing behind the circle and walks around touching the heads of each player. As the child goes around the circle, he/she says “dog” with each head he/she touches. When the child is ready, he/she touches another child’s head and says “cat.” The seated child then stands up and chases the other trying to tag him or her. If the child can get around the circle once and sit down in the empty spot before the other child catches him or her, the child is safe. If not, the child has to go around the circle again, saying “dog, dog, cat.

### ART ACTIVITIES

**Dog Houses**

Children make doghouses out of cardboard boxes. They make a big green doghouse for Big Dog and a little red doghouse for Little Dog. Doghouses can be big enough for children to play in when completed. They can then make the dogs and other items from the story to put in the matching doghouse.

**Light and Dark**

- To explore the idea of light and dark, children can mix paint colors at the art table. Demonstrate how white paint lightens colors, making tints, while black paint darkens them, making shades.
- They can also make a black and white opposite craft by working with a paper—half black and half white.
- Invite the children to paint with white and black on the paper and observe how the paint looks different on each side.

### SCIENCE/COOKING/DISCOVERY

**Textures (Sense of Touch)**

Opposite textures work well to create art projects for preschool students. For this activity, gather a variety of materials that offer opposite textures. For example, you might have a piece of smooth foil wrapping paper and a rough bamboo mat or a soft piece of faux fur and a hard piece of plastic. Have the students create a picture using two opposite materials.

**Hot and Cold**

Children are given the opportunity to experience opposites: hot and cold (chocolate ice cream and hot chocolate, cooked vegetables vs. raw vegetables).

**Cookies**

Use cookie cutters to make Big Dog and Little Dog cookies. Children can also use red and green icing or sprinkles to make Fred’s and Ted’s shirts. They can also make big and small dog bones for Big Dog and Little Dog.

### SING TOGETHER

**Six Little Dogs**

(to the tune of *Six Little Ducks*)

Six little dogs that I once knew, fat ones, skinny ones, fair ones too. But the one little dog with the brown curly fur, he led the others with grr, grr, grr. Grr, grr, grr Grr, grr, grr He led the others with a grr, grr, GRR!

### LANGUAGE

Introduce and discuss the meaning of the words (e.g., big, little, same, different, opposites, short, tall).

### DRAMATIC PLAY

**Using Puppets and Stuffed Animals**

- Children pretend they are Fred and Ted and develop speaking skills and self-esteem by talking through Big Dog and Little Dog puppets or stuffed animals.
- Sort stuffed animals in groups of big and little.

**Acting**

- Children act out happy and sad, and other opposites through dramatic play.
- Children act out pages of the book by pretending to be Big Dog and Little Dog. They can wear a red or green tee shirt with Fred or Ted written on the front of the T-shirt to reinforce the dogs’ favorite colors.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>MATH CONCEPTS</th>
<th>SUGGESTED APPLICATION OF CONCEPT (TOY)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dog Counting</strong></td>
<td>Basic Skills Board – Fine Motor Skills; Zippers, Buckles, Tying, Lacing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counting cards made with index cards, a dog notepad from the teacher store, and a paw print stamp. Children count the paws and match them to the numeral on the dog.</td>
<td>Melissa and Doug Toys</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Measurements</strong></td>
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<td>Read Dr. Seuss’ “The Foot Book.” Measure all of your children’s feet. Trace them and have children put them in order of smallest to largest.</td>
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<td><strong>Block Area</strong></td>
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<td>Children create tall and short structures while building with blocks. Possible extension: Count the number of blocks to show that the bigger the number of blocks the bigger the structure.</td>
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**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- Go Dog. Go! by P. D. Eastman
- The Foot Book by Dr. Seuss
- Clifford the Big Red Dog by Norman Bridwel
- Play and Learn with Clifford
- Clifford Opening Theme on YouTube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWwlyKOCrd8