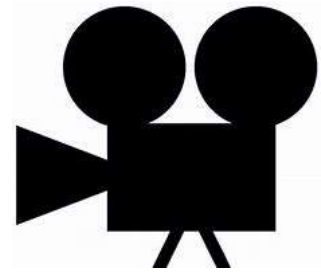


Movie Matters

Reflecting on story to encourage fun, conversation and response, for children and families. Written by Lorraine Darlow with permission for free use by churches in their work to support children and families.



Hello! The following resources have been written to provide ideas for children and families as they spend time together at home, especially in current times where social gatherings are restricted and people are socially isolating.

I love the benefits the virtual world offers but it is great to take some time out each day to just have fun and discover more about one another. So these resource ideas are to help families to gather together in shared activities – especially to talk, reflect, share thoughts and ideas, eat together and have fun – with a flexible structure in what could be long days at home. Children may have been given materials or had learning websites suggested by schools, so these resources will offer some alternatives for play and conversation and some time to be quiet and rest. The ‘Be Grateful’ and ‘Be Still’ activities could be used as prayer or meditation spaces.

The wonderful stories and ideas contained in contemporary movies offer a springboard to help children, and people of all ages, ponder the story, its characters and themes, and to share views, feelings, ideas and actions that arise from the story and conversations around it. The Mini Movies can either be found on Disney plus, Sky TV or Youtube.

Some preparation or forward planning is needed for some ideas but others can be organised as you go and modified to suit available resources and ages involved. You can choose how long to spend on each activity or to select only a few of the ideas suggested, but each Mini Movie session should offer at least 60 minutes of activity ideas. And you could use the format of the sessions with any movie you enjoy.

For feature length movie series, you may require Catch up TV, Netflix, Prime Video or DVD.

Have fun!

Mini Movies

1. Boundin’ 8 mins
2. Dug’s Special Mission 6 mins
3. For the Birds 5 mins
4. Frozen Fever 9 mins
5. How to Train Your Dragon: Homecoming 22 mins
6. Jack Jack Attack 6 mins
7. Lava 8 mins
8. Mike’s New Car 5 mins
9. Party Central 7 mins
10. Presto 6 mins

Boundin'

Gather: get comfy and have some paper and pencils to hand to write or draw anything that comes to mind as you watch the short movie.

Watch: the short movie Boundin' (8mins)

Wonder: chat about the following...

I wonder...

- what you liked best/least about this story?
- if it is ever ok to laugh at someone?
 - maybe they did something to make you laugh on purpose
 - maybe something happened that looked funny to you but they feel sad about it
- how you feel when someone laughs at you?
- if you can remember a time you wish something hadn't happened then were glad it did?
- what you can do to enjoy being you?
- what you could do today to make others smile or laugh?

Create: using play dough (bought or made at home) create some sheep and others animals in a field. I wonder what they enjoy doing most?

Get Active: time for a workout! See how many actions you can come up with to mimic animals. Jumping frogs, waddling ducks, galloping horses, hopping kangaroos. Play sleeping bunnies (for younger children) or the sleeping lions game (for older children)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWWjyZcxp-Y>

Share: share some food and drinks. If you have time, you could make some sheep shaped cookies and decorate them or sheep sandwiches by using different cookie cutters to make shapes for the body and head in the bread, then add fillings and veggie sticks and shapes to make face, ears and legs.

Be Grateful: Around a table or in a circle on the floor, share what you are thankful for today. You could write or draw those things on a piece of paper and create a 'thankful' jar.

Be still: grab a cushion and find a space to lie down on the floor without touching anyone else. Close your eyes. Listen quietly to the sounds around you or outside the house. I wonder what those sounds make you think of? If it helps, play a piece of gentle music or noises from the ocean or forest.

Doug's Special Mission

Gather: get comfy and have some paper and pencils to hand to write or draw anything that comes to mind as you watch the short movie.

Watch: the short movie Dug's Special Mission (6 mins)

Wonder: chat about the following...

I wonder...

- what you liked best/least about this story?
- what it feels like to be told what to do?
- when it is right to follow instructions?
- how it might feel to be given a special mission?
- what mission you would love to have?
- what mission you would love to give others?
- how you could join in a special mission to help others today?

Create: make an origami dog. <https://www.wikihow.com/Make-an-Origami-Dog>
Other than chasing birds, I wonder other things dogs love to chase?

Get Active: time for a treasure hunt! Hide dog bones around the garden (or house if weather doesn't permit outside play). Use a box of real dog bones or cut the shapes of dog bones out of coloured card. Since dogs tend to bury their bones, you may want to hide some of the bones under things. If using coloured card, ask different players to collect different colours, or give instructions to find one green, two yellow, three blue, four red and five white bones. A simpler option is to just instruct each player to find a certain number of bones.

Share: share some food and drinks. Hot dogs would be an idea snack today, washed down with your favourite milk shake or juice! As you enjoy your food and drinks, play the rock, paper, scissors game – or learn how to play it if you don't yet know how.

Be Grateful: Write a note or draw a picture for someone you have been thinking about today. If they don't live in your house, you could text or call them to share that message or take a photo of your drawing and send a picture message.

Be still: find a space to stand where you can't touch anyone else when you stretch out your arms. Play musical statues using the music from the theme tune from Mission Impossible (available on YouTube and music streaming applications). When the music starts, show off your best sky movements and expressions. When the music stops 'freeze'. See if you can hold the frozen position for 15 seconds! At the end of the music, find a place to sit or lie down, and slow down your breathing by breathing slowly and rhythmically. You might want to close your eyes as you do this, and remember all the things you've done today. I wonder what you are most thankful for today?

For the Birds

Gather: get comfy and have some paper and pencils to hand to write or draw anything that comes to mind as you watch the short movie.

Watch: the short movie For the Birds (5 mins)

Wonder: chat about the following...

I wonder...

- what you liked best/least about this story?
- how you can tell how others are feeling or what they are thinking without using words?
- when you thought something was a good idea then realized there was a down side to your plan?
- how many expressions you can make for others to guess what emotion you are mimicking?
- when you have agreed with others to act one way then wished you hadn't?
- how a group of people should treat someone who is different in some way from them?

Create: work on your sewing skills by making this bird craft <https://www.activityvillage.co.uk/felt-kiwi-softie-craft> or substitute fabric for different coloured card and use glue to stick wings, feet, eyes and beak. If you could perch anywhere in the world, I wonder where you might want to sit and gaze at the view?

Get Active: have fun with this song and dance - which parents and grandparents will know well! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjMOJU26EsU>

Watch the video or learn the actions and then dance along to the music (available on iTunes or Amazon music).

Share: share some food and drinks. Make some toast with favourite toppings. I wonder if you know any bird jokes? Here are a few to get you started...

- What do owls sing when it is raining? 'Too wet, too woo'!
- What do you get if you cross a parrot with a woodpecker? A bird that talks Morse code!

Have a go at making up your own or finding others on the Active Village website above.

Be Grateful: Show the birds some love by making them a special cake. **You will need:** bacon fat, birdseed, a heatproof drinks cup, string. Make a small hole in the base of the drinks cup and thread through the string, leaving a few inches either side of the cup. Melt the fat gently and mix with the birdseed (this must be done by or supervised by an adult). Leave to cool slightly, then pack it into the cup, making sure the string comes out of the middle of the cup. Leave to cool. Remove the cup and tie the string around the cake to secure. Tie the cake in your garden for the birds to enjoy.

Be still: grab a cushion and a blanket and find a space near an open window to lie down so you can hear outside. Close your eyes. In the quiet, listen to the sounds from outside. Can you hear any birds? I wonder how many different noises birds make? Take some time to rest, and imagine all the different kinds of birds you know. I wonder what your favourite bird is?

Frozen Fever

Gather: get comfy and have some paper and pencils to hand to write or draw anything that comes to mind as you watch the short movie.

Watch: the short movie Frozen Fever (9 mins)

Wonder: chat about the following...

I wonder...

- what you liked best/least about this story?
- if you have ever been left in charge of something?
- what you love about birthdays?
- what you think of having a birthday treasure hunt?
- how you feel when your plans don't work out the way you wanted them to?
- what makes a day great for you?
- how you could help make someone's day great?

Create: create a snowball scene using craft materials and use cotton wool or scrunched up tissue paper for snowballs.

Get Active: create a treasure hunt using ribbon tied to items around the garden (or house), each with a luggage label tied to them with a clue to the next ribbon and clue. Give a clue to finding the first ribbon with clue two. Make sure you have a nice surprise at the end of the hunt, even a bag with cake making ingredients or cupcakes to decorate for today's share time!

Share: share some food and drinks. Make and/or decorate some cupcakes. Use different colours of icing, sweets, or little dried fruit pieces to decorate. I wonder who you would most like to share cake with today?

Be Grateful: If you were having a birthday party, who would you definitely want to invite? Make a list of all the people you'd want to see at your party. Take a moment to be thankful for all of those friends and family members.

Be still: find a space to sit or lie down on the floor. Think of a recent birthday (of yourself or someone else) and all the lovely things that can happen when someone celebrates a birthday – giving of cards and gifts, receiving cards and gifts, enjoying birthday cake, games, balloons, family and friends, fun and laughter. You might want to close your eyes as you remember and imagine all those thing in your mind. I wonder what your favourite thing is about birthdays?

How to Train Your Dragon: Homecoming

Gather: get comfy and have some paper and pencils to hand to write or draw anything that comes to mind as you watch the short movie.

Watch: the short movie How to Train Your Dragon: Homecoming (22 mins)

Wonder: chat about the following...

I wonder...

- what you liked best/least about this story?
- what you think makes someone a good friend?
- what makes some families different?
- how you would see these as being either good or bad things?
- what you love about your family? Why is that?
- what annoys you about your family? Why is that?
- who you would say is a hero in your family? Why is that?
- what games you like to play together and what activities you enjoy together in your family?
- what new thing(s) you would like to do as a family?

Create: create a family tree using card, thread and labels (and pictures if you have them) of as many relatives as you can. Or, cut out a shield shape from cardboard and design a family crest. You could paint it or glue strips of coloured tissue paper or metallic card to decorate it.

Get Active: Put on a play! Do you know a fun story of something that happened in your family? Decide which story you want to use and who will play each character. Dress up, create props and re-enact that event. You may need a grown up to be help by being the director!

Share: share some food and drinks. Enjoy some fiery dragon scale Doritos and dragon food fish crackers with dip! And make a Viking shield platter with your favourite fruit arranged in circles to look like a shield. I wonder what other Viking or Dragon themed food and drinks you could come up with? Enjoy!

Be Grateful: After changing her mind about how she felt about dragons, Hiccup's daughter shouts: 'I love dragons!' In turns, shout out the things that you love. Maybe it is people you are missing or places you like to go to or things you like to do. When we can't visit people or places that we love, we remember how much they mean to us.

Be still: grab a cushion and find a space to lie down on the floor. Stretch out and imagine you can fly like Toothless and his family. I wonder what it would feel like to soar above the land and sea, the mountains and cities. Play 'Dragon's Homecoming Suite' (available on Spotify) from the movie soundtrack or similar soaring music to help with this.

Jack Jack Attack

Gather: get comfy and have some paper and pencils to hand to write or draw anything that comes to mind as you watch the short movie.

Watch: the short movie Jack Jack Attack (6 mins)

Wonder: chat about the following...

I wonder...

- what you liked best/least about this story?
- what your name is and why you were given that name?
- if your name has a special meaning or if it is the same as someone else in your family?
- what special skills you have?
- what things you do that make grown-ups cross? Why do you think that is?
- how you feel when someone keeps asking you questions?
- if you have ever had a bad day that you wish you could forget? What happened?

Create: using play dough (bought or made at home) create some extraordinary characters or super heroes. I wonder what their special skills might be?

Get Active: time for a workout! Work out an exercise routine with stretching, bending, hopping, jumping and jogging exercises. Make sure you are in a safe space and on a suitable floor/mat to avoid any slips or trips. Play a favourite few songs to help keep you going. And after each minute of exercise pause the music and have a minute of rest!

Share: share some food and drinks. Decorate mini pizzas with your favourite toppings to design a funny face! Whilst they are cooking, try the 'Be Grateful' activity.

Be Grateful: Gather around a table and have each person make an imprint of each of their finger prints using coloured ink pads and card. Write the person's name on the card and let the prints dry. Share five special things you value about each other. Once dry, write one of those things under each of the five finger prints. You can use a marker pen to draw a face on the fingerprints. Display your print pictures.

Alternatively, on a piece of card A4 size or bigger, use a dark coloured sharpie pen to draw a tree with stretching branches and deep roots. Use the ink pads, different colours if you can, to decorate the tree with your fingerprints. Each print could represent someone in your family. You could add a special message below or around the tree – even written around the roots or branches.

Be still: grab a cushion and find a space to lie down on the floor without touching anyone else. Close your eyes. Breathe steadily in and out, and focus on the noise of your breathing, the noises in your house, the noises outside. Now focus on the rhythm of your breathing. I wonder if it is fast or slow? Make sure it is slow enough to know that you are relaxing for a few moments (or longer) so you feel rested after all your activities so far today.

Lava

Gather: get comfy and have some paper and pencils to hand to write or draw anything that comes to mind as you watch the short movie.

Watch: the short movie Lava (6 mins)

Wonder: chat about the following...

I wonder...

- what you liked best/least about this story/song?
- what you dream of?
- what funny songs you like to sing?
- if there is a song(s) you and your family members like to sing together?
- if you know what effects singing has on you?
It can have some of the same effects as exercise, and make you feel good and less stressed.
It is an aerobic activity, meaning it gets more oxygen into the blood for better circulation, which also tends to promote a happier mood.

Create: learn a little bit of science today by making an erupting volcano! Full instructions for making the volcano and the eruption here <https://www.thoughtco.com/baking-soda-and-vinegar-chemical-volcano-604100>

Get Active: Spend some time singing together. Choose some favourite songs or karaoke tracks to sing and have some fun! You could also practice hula dancing and limbo dancing.

Share: share some food and drinks. Some tropical drinks and fruit dipped in delicious chocolate lava today! Look up some recipes for fruit smoothies or mocktails. Accompany these with some warm chocolate dipping sauce (or get out your chocolate fountain if you have one) and your favourite fruit. Banana, strawberries, apple slices and also marshmallows work particularly well!

Be Grateful: Write a note or send a message to someone to let them know you are thinking about them today. Maybe you could write a song or poem to tell them what you are grateful for. Or FaceTime them for a chat.

Or, if you have some sand, take some time to spread it on a tray or a suitable space outside. Use a stick (either from the garden or a lollypop stick) and draw a smiley face of someone you are remembering today with their name underneath. Spend a few moments remembering their smile and laugh. Then wipe the sand and draw someone else you want to remember. It's good to give thanks for those we love and care about.

Be still: gather together and have a mirror to hand – a shaving mirror or something of that size is ideal. Did you know that 'smiling' releases chemicals in the body that make you feel good from head to toe! Not only do these natural chemicals make you feel happier, but they also relax your body and reduce physical pain.

Pass the mirror to each person and ask them to look in the mirror and smile for a few moments. I wonder what you notice about yourself? Remind them that when they don't feel too happy they simply need to practice smiling! It will relax them, help reduce any pain, and make them feel happier!

Mike's New Car

Gather: get comfy and have some paper and pencils to hand to write or draw anything that comes to mind as you watch the short movie.

Watch: the short movie Mike's New Car (5 mins)

Wonder: chat about the following...

I wonder...

- what you liked best/least about this story/song?
- if you can remember what the last new thing you bought or were given was?
- whether you like to read the instructions for something new or if you like to try and work out how it works without instructions?
- if you like to figure things out for yourself or if you like to get help from others?
- if you like to help people when you think they need it or if you prefer to wait until someone asks for help?
- what new thing you would like at the moment, and why?
- whether a newer version of something is always better than an older model?

Create: using Lego, card and sticky shapes, or play doh, build or design a car. I wonder what make or model it will be, and what features you will design for it?

Get Active: Check out Luigi and Guido Tyre Tumble game here <https://www.nhs.uk/10-minute-shake-up/shake-ups/luigi-and-guido-tyre-tumble>.

You'll need a bucket, some old newspaper to screw up into balls to throw (the same number for each person), and four items to mark out a square area! With the bucket in the centre of your marked out area, stand at one of the corners and take it in turns to throw. Once you've thrown them all, do a lap of the area! Now play again and try to beat your time!

Share: share some food and drinks. Bagels and donuts are the perfect tyre shaped food! Chose savoury or sweet (or maybe both!). You could enjoy a bagel with toppings like cream cheese, ham and tomato, or mini donuts with delicious dipping sauce.

Be Grateful: Make a list (or draw) different people that you spend time with to do different things. The friends you play sport with, or who you like to go for a cycle with, or who are in your Scout group, or friendship group at school. Think about each of these people and share one thing that you appreciate about each person. If you have their phone number send them a message to say hi or call. Or if they are younger in years ask a grown up to help call their parent so you can say hello, and ask how they are. It is so good to have friends and family who we can enjoy spending time with.

Be still: grab a cushion and a blanket and find a place to lie down so you can hear outside. Imagine you are in a car or bus or train, and you are on route to a favourite place. It may be the seaside, a park, a family member's house, or a favourite restaurant. Close your eyes. In the quiet, listen to the sounds from outside. And picture the journey you will take. I wonder what you will pass along the way? And what you will do first when you get there. Picture the scene and all you will do in that place. I wonder what will make it the best day for you?

Party Central

Gather: get comfy and have some paper and pencils to hand to write or draw anything that comes to mind as you watch the short movie.

Watch: the short movie Party Central (7 mins)

Wonder: chat about the following...

I wonder...

- what you liked best/least about this story/song?
- what you think makes a great party?
- how you would get prepared to make sure it was great?
- what theme, food and games would you choose?
- who you would invite and why?
- who you would choose not to invite and why?
- if you have an idea for a party right now? What would the reason for that party be?

Create: plan a party! When and where will the party be? Will it be a virtual party? Decide a theme and guest list. I wonder what you will do during the party, what food you will choose, what games you will play and what music you will have. Design invites – they may be homemade or designed on a computer, or in the form of an email or phone message. I wonder what would be the best kind of invite right now? Now all you need to do is send them!

Get Active: No party is complete without some karaoke, so get practicing! You will find lots of song choices on YouTube. Singing is great for your wellbeing, so make sure you join in.

Share: share some food and drinks. Choose your best party pizza! You'll need your base of choice and a variety of toppings. It could be sweet chocolate or jam base with a choice of banana, strawberries, chocolate buttons and marshmallows. Or it could be a savoury tomato or barbeque base, with mushroom, onions, peppers, pepperoni, chicken, ham, pineapple or olives. There's so much to choose from. I wonder what pizza you are dreaming of?

Be Grateful: Write a message for each person in your home on a postcard sized card. Tell that person why you are grateful for them or what you would like to say thank you for. You might write: 'Thank you mum for your funny jokes.' 'Thank you Joe for sharing your toys.' 'I love the pizza you cooked grandad, thank you!'

Now, wrap one card in gift wrap, then put another card on top of the parcel and wrap again, and so on until you have a gift wrapped parcel with a card under each layer of paper. Play pass the parcel and when the music stops, the person holding the parcel opens a layer and reads the card that is inside.

Be still: play some party games that require some amount of being still. Try musical statues, memory game (cover a range of items on a tray with a tea-towel, then show all players the items for 60 seconds then cover it again, and they have to remember as many items as they can – either write down or shout out), feely bag (ask the children to put their hand in the bag or box and guess what it is, without looking), chopstick challenge (give each person a bowl with 10-20 raisins, depending on how difficult you want to make it, and a piece of kitchen towel; they have to move the raisins from the bowl to the kitchen towel, and the fastest finished is the winner!).

Presto

Gather: get comfy and have some paper and pencils to hand to write or draw anything that comes to mind as you watch the short movie.

Watch: the short movie Presto (6 mins)

Wonder: chat about the following...

I wonder...

- what you liked best/least about this story?
- what it feels like to be really hungry?
- what mattered most to the magician, and why?
- if the bunny would have played tricks on the magician if he'd taken better care of him?
- who looks after pets in your family?
- what it takes to do a good job of caring for a pet?
- what lesson the magician learnt?

Create: I wonder how good you are at copying and following instructions? Check out these videos to create a bunny craft <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Morgv3JHN7A> or master a magic trick <https://www.care.com/c/stories/4051/easy-magic-tricks-for-kids/>

Get Active: time for a workout! Do a set of jumps jacks, tuck jumps and one foot hops. Now, play sleeping bunnies (for younger children) or the sleeping lions game (for older children) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWWjyZcyp-Y>

Share: share some food and drinks. Make some bunny shaped cookies or use different sized plain biscuits to make a round body and head as your basic bunny shapes. Decorate by using different colours of icing, sweets, or little dried fruit pieces to decorate.

Be Grateful: Around a table or in a circle on the floor, remember all the pets who live with different members of your family. I wonder what you especially like about each of these pets? Maybe it's how friendly or smart they are. Whatever it is, remember them in all their funny ways. I wonder what you could do (or plan to do) to show the pets how much they are loved?

Be still: grab a cushion and find a space to lie down on the floor without touching anyone else. Close your eyes. Listen to these animal noises and see if you can guess what each animal is https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTrC_McU62Q