



Home-Nursery Activity Ideas

Here at St Teresa's Little Learners we have put together a home learning activity ideas pack for your child during this period of social distancing when you will be spending more time at home.

Activities are categorised in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS). We hope you find these ideas helpful and your Little Learner occupied.

Personal Social and Emotional Development

Joining in with household tasks is a great way to build independence, self-esteem and confidence as well as crossing over into other aspects of learning such as literacy and maths.

Tasks at home:

- Helping to sort washing into categories such as colour or item.
- Sweeping, the children love using the dustpan and brush to help at nursery
- Using pegs to hang clothes on the washing line or clothes airer
- Buttering their bread to make a sandwich (we have been practicing this at snack time)
- Cooking or baking - helping to measure out ingredients, stirring, chopping and peeling.
- Helping to dress baby brothers or sisters.
- Pairing up socks.
- Looking up a new recipe online or in a book.



Other PSED ideas:

- Keep a diary, drawing pictures of how they feel or a record of what they have been getting up to at home.
- Den building using bed sheets and cushions, telling stories together in their den.
- Role play shops with food cupboard items such as tins and packets.
- Create daily to do/task lists and tick them off with them as you go.
- Mindfulness activities, lots of ideas on Twinkl.
- Keep a routine going, children thrive from repetition and routines support them in feeling safe and secure. Make your own visual timetable.



Communication & Language

Conversations are crucial! As one of the prime areas of learning communication and language has an impact across all areas of learning.

Ask lots of open ended questions: "I wonder how that happened?", "Why do you think that?", "how do you know that?", "how did you do that", "tell me about it".

Make observations about the world around them, look at the weather each day, we discuss this every morning at nursery as well as finding out the day of the week, date and month. Garden, doorstep or window observations such as counting how many birds you see in a couple of minutes, cloud watching... what shapes can you see?

Activity ideas:

- Sound games - sit as quiet as you can and write down together what you can hear. Or you can find lots of great sound guessing games on YouTube to play together, here are a couple of suggestions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1m4h79JZso>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1m4h79JZso>



- Eye spy games.
- Positional language games, use a favourite small toy such as a puppet, small world person or animal and use positional language such as: "Simon says...under the chair, on the sofa, in the cupboard, on the table, next to the TV."
- Singing songs together, use sites such as Twinkl to download some free nursery rhyme cards, learn some news ones together, at nursery we recently tried the space themed rhymes!
- Using an empty plastic bottle and some rice/pasta/lentils/beads/buttons create a musical instrument to use while singing nursery rhymes.
- Now is a fantastic time to share lots of stories together (See your early literacy pack for some book-themed ideas as well as the amazing benefits of reading together).

Physical development

The children have been really enjoying our yoga sessions at nursery, use the free Twinkl parent login and search 'Yoga gross motor activity cards' for the poses we have been practicing. For some active screen time try Cosmic Kids yoga

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga> or PE lessons with Jo Wicks 9am mon-Fri
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RzOgo1pTda8>



Other activity ideas include:

- Traditional games such as hopscotch.
- Water painting, using a paint brush and pot of water let children paint the pavement or garden fence to develop key muscles in their shoulders and elbows.
- Ball games.
- Riding on their bike or scooter in the garden or round the block (practice responsible social distancing)
- Dancing!
- Search for the 'action word and picture cards' on Twinkl.
- Action songs such as 'grand old duke of York', 'if your happy and you know it', 'wheels on the bus'.

Activities to support development of fine motor skills (also a great opportunity for some calm time)

- Threading straws, pipe cleaners, string or spaghetti through a colander.
- Dot painting with cotton buds
- Pegging washing on the line.
- Hole punch and paper.
- Save an assortment of empty bottles, how fast can you screw the lids on!
- Learn new skills such as doing up their own zips, buttons and other clothes fastenings
- At nursery the children have daily access to paper and scissors, they have all really enjoyed practicing their cutting skills recently, provide them with some children's scissors and paper, you could draw patterns for them to cut around or simply enjoy cutting up the paper how they choose.
- Playdough. (See TTS guide linked at the end for recipe)
- Fill a washing up bowl with water, put plastic letters, small world animals, bottle tops or pegs into the water and encourage your child to scoop them out with a large serving spoon or sieve. Add an extra challenge by creating bubbles to make them harder to catch.
- Pencil control through drawing and colouring.
- Independence skills such as mastering using a knife and fork effectively.

For those children who are still in nappies and are showing signs of toileting readiness (dry through the day, able to tell you when their nappy needs changing, can dress and undress themselves, shows an interest in using the potty or toilet) now would be the perfect time to supporting them in making the transition into knickers/pants.

Literacy

If you are going to be spending more time at home than normal then now is a fantastic time to share lots of books together, here are some book related ideas:

- Act out your favorite story.
- Create your own book.
- Draw the characters from your favorite story, make your own props.
- Twinkl offer lots of great resources based on favorite children's books.
- See your St Teresa's Literacy pack for more ideas and inspiration.
- 'Vooks' is a child safe and advert free streaming library of read-aloud animated story books. Please note **this is a subscription service** but they are currently offering one month free (Please read their T's & C's)
- Download 'Teach Your Monster to read' from the app store/Google Play/ Amazon or onto your desktop for some fun games aimed at developing phonological awareness and early reading.

Other ideas to support early literacy and writing skills:

- Get cooking or baking and make your own recipe, you could cut out pictures of ingredients from magazines and encourage your child to write the names of ingredients and numbers for quantity (remember, scribbles hold meaning!).
- Creating letters from their names using a variety of objects: pegs, string, Lego, leaves and sticks or other natural materials found in the garden or park.
- Mark making in trays or on plates filled with sand or flour.
- Mark making with chalks (or water and paint brushes) on the pavement.
- Have a go at Dough Disco on you tube with the playdough you made together <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-IfzeG1aC4>
- Write letters or draw pictures to friends and family you can't visit at the moment.



Mathematics

Playing with numbers, activity ideas:

- Dice games to encourage recognition of number without counting (subitizing)
There are some great games ideas on Twinkl such as 'Balloon Roll and colour'
- Comparing groups of objects and working out which is more/less/the same and how many you have altogether (introduce a variety of language such as fewer, most, additional, smaller and total for an extra challenge).
- Forming numbers with malleable materials such as playdough.
- Measuring how tall they are, use some alternatives to a tape measure, e.g. how many shoes long are you when lying down.
- Number hunt - let children use a camera to hunt and photograph all the number 4's they can find in the house.
- Children have an innate mathematical ability and respond to music because they naturally enjoy counting to the beat. Put some music on and have a dance, can they make up their own routine counting to the beat?
- Number matching. Using some paper write out numbers 1-10, ask your child to find 3 shoes, 4 spoons, 6 cars etc. practice matching them to the correct number.
- Sites such as White Rose Maths have some great free online resources at the moment <https://whiterosemaths.com/homelearning/early-years/>

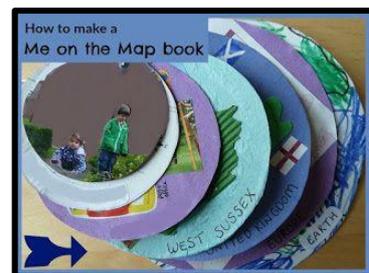
Shape, space, measure and pattern activities:

- Card games such as snap or dominos
- Shape sorters.
- Puzzles.
- Shape hunt. Using a camera go on a shape hunt around your home, can they find all the circles, are there more square or triangle shaped objects?
- Building with bricks.
- Emptying and filling using sand or water and a variety of containers e.g. empty butter tubs, shampoo or soap bottles, spoons, plastic cups, sieves and funnels.
- There are lots of pattern-based activities on sites such as Twinkl.
- Light and heavy, sort objects according to their weight, either using their senses or some scales.
- Colour sorting clothes for the washing.
- Cut out an assortment of circles, squares, rectangles and triangles; what objects can children make with them.



Understanding of the World

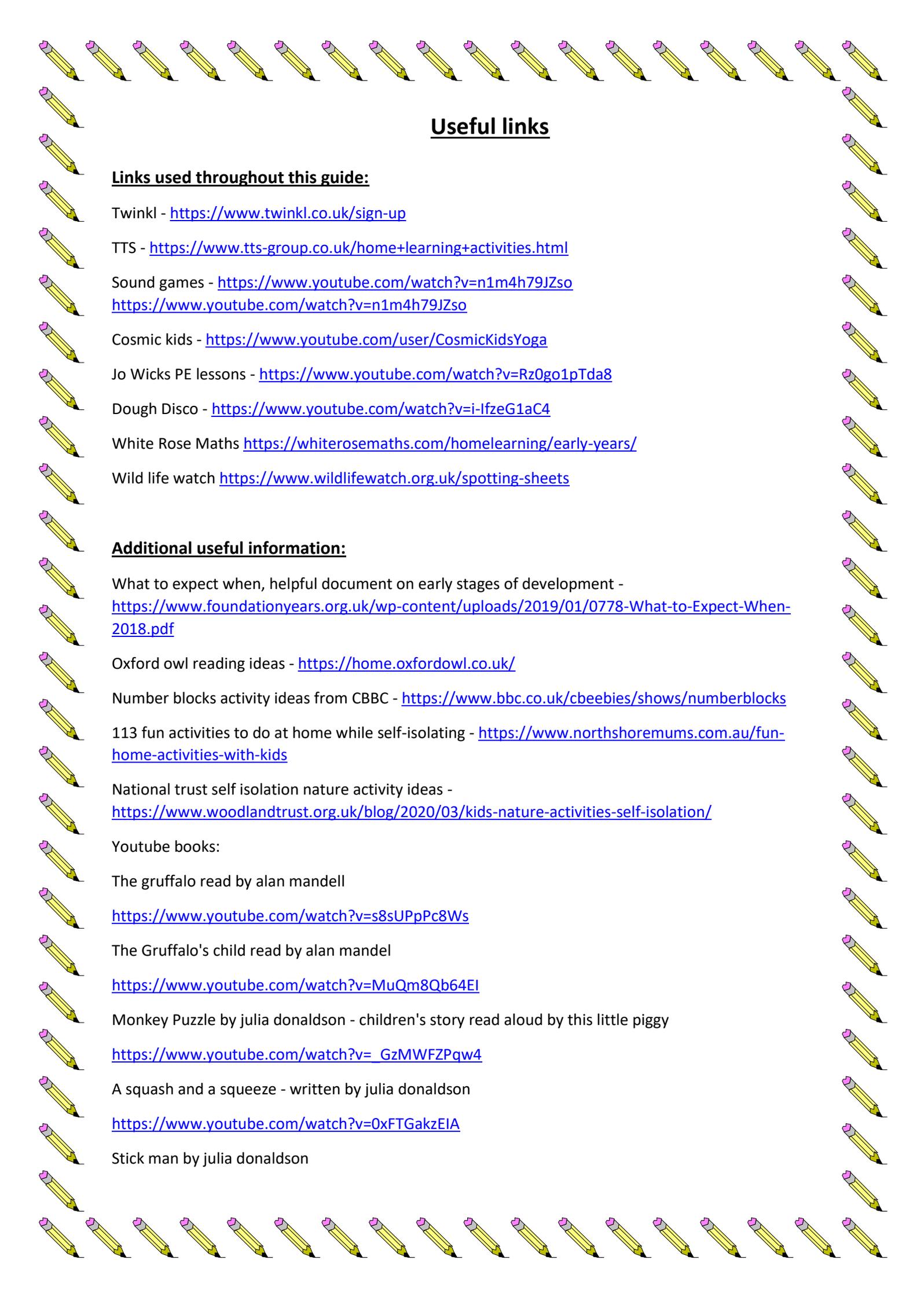
- Occupation role play games, lots of printable resources and ideas on Twinkl e.g. post office, travel agent, vets etc.
- You might like to order some photos online to be printed and delivered, use pictures from special family events and create a photo album.
- Going on a bug hunt in the garden or park, use sites such as <https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/spotting-sheets> for some ideas on what to look out for.
- Using magnifying glasses (or the zoom on your phone camera) to take a closer look at features of objects in their environment.
- Growing: pop the top of a carrot in a shallow dish of water and watch the top sprout green leaves, growing cress, helping out in the garden, try making your own compost or a water butt (use an old bucket to collect rain water and water the plants).
- Press flowers.
- Weather recording, looking online to find out details such as temperature and wind speed.
- Animals around the world - look online and use sites such as Twinkl to find out information about different habitats, what animals live there and the features that help them survive.
- Create your own calendar, mark on important dates and your cultural celebrations. Considering the time of year there are lots of great resources online that support the teaching of the Easter Story.
- Make a paper chain of people, discuss similarities and differences, what makes us the same or different to our family and friends?
- Investigate and draw your own life cycles, with spring upon us now is a great time to look a little closer at the life cycle of a butterfly, tadpole, chick or a tree.
- Staying indoors provides the perfect opportunity to have a sort out or perhaps fix some items that have broken, involve children in fixing or making objects to develop an understanding or how things work. For some positive risk taking why not think about an adult led activity that involves taking apart an old toy, mechanical or IT object that might be going in the bin, look at and discuss the different components, what they are/what they might do and how it was put together.
- Me on the Map - Find out about your local community, support your child in learning their address, the name of their town, county, country and create your own 'me on the map'.
- Use apps like google maps to 'drop pins' where friends and relatives live or favourite places to visit, have a look at the back of the cupboard as you may have some old paper maps hidden away, children love these and we have recently been looking at them in nursery linked to the story 'What the Ladybird Heard'.



Expressive arts and design

- Exploring textures, colour and properties, what can you find around the house that is smooth, bumpy, rough, shiny, stretchy (introduce a range of new vocabulary: uneven, polished, reflective, springy)
- Dancing.
- Make your own instruments using plastic cups filled with beads, buttons, pasta or rice. Use when singing your own songs, practice making loud and quiet noises or copying rhythms.
- Freeze ice cubes with food colouring or paint, once frozen add them together in a dish or bowl and observe the colours mixing, what new colour do they make?
- Hand painting with primary colours, what new colours can you make?
- Make a rainbow using a variety of materials and display in your window to join the #frommywindow group, where children and adults display their artwork for others to spot when out on walks (whilst practicing responsible social distancing).
- Make some homemade birthday cards for upcoming family and friends birthdays.
- Mixed media pictures. Use a variety of materials found around your home to create a mixed media picture, you could use newspaper, magazines, wool, string, cardboard boxes or old t-shirt material.
- Painting pictures on tin foil.
- Easter crafts, there are lots of great ideas on Twinkl or sites like Pinterest.
- Make natural paintbrushes using twigs, string and a variety of materials for bristles such as: grass, leaves, flowers, straw.
- Cars or animals on paint to make tracks or footprints.
- Explore a variety of artistic techniques with paper, such as: bending, folding, gluing, taping, scrunching, fringing, curling, colouring linking and hole punching.
- Role play games, why not put on a dance show!





Useful links

Links used throughout this guide:

Twinkl - <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/sign-up>

TTS - <https://www.tts-group.co.uk/home+learning+activities.html>

Sound games - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1m4h79JZso>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1m4h79JZso>

Cosmic kids - <https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga>

Jo Wicks PE lessons - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rz0go1pTda8>

Dough Disco - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-lfzeG1aC4>

White Rose Maths <https://whiterosemaths.com/homelearning/early-years/>

Wild life watch <https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/spotting-sheets>

Additional useful information:

What to expect when, helpful document on early stages of development -

<https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/0778-What-to-Expect-When-2018.pdf>

Oxford owl reading ideas - <https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/>

Number blocks activity ideas from CBBC - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/numberblocks>

113 fun activities to do at home while self-isolating - <https://www.northshoremums.com.au/fun-home-activities-with-kids>

National trust self isolation nature activity ideas -

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/03/kids-nature-activities-self-isolation/>

Youtube books:

The gruffalo read by alan mandell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8sUPpPc8Ws>

The Gruffalo's child read by alan mandel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MuQm8Qb64EI>

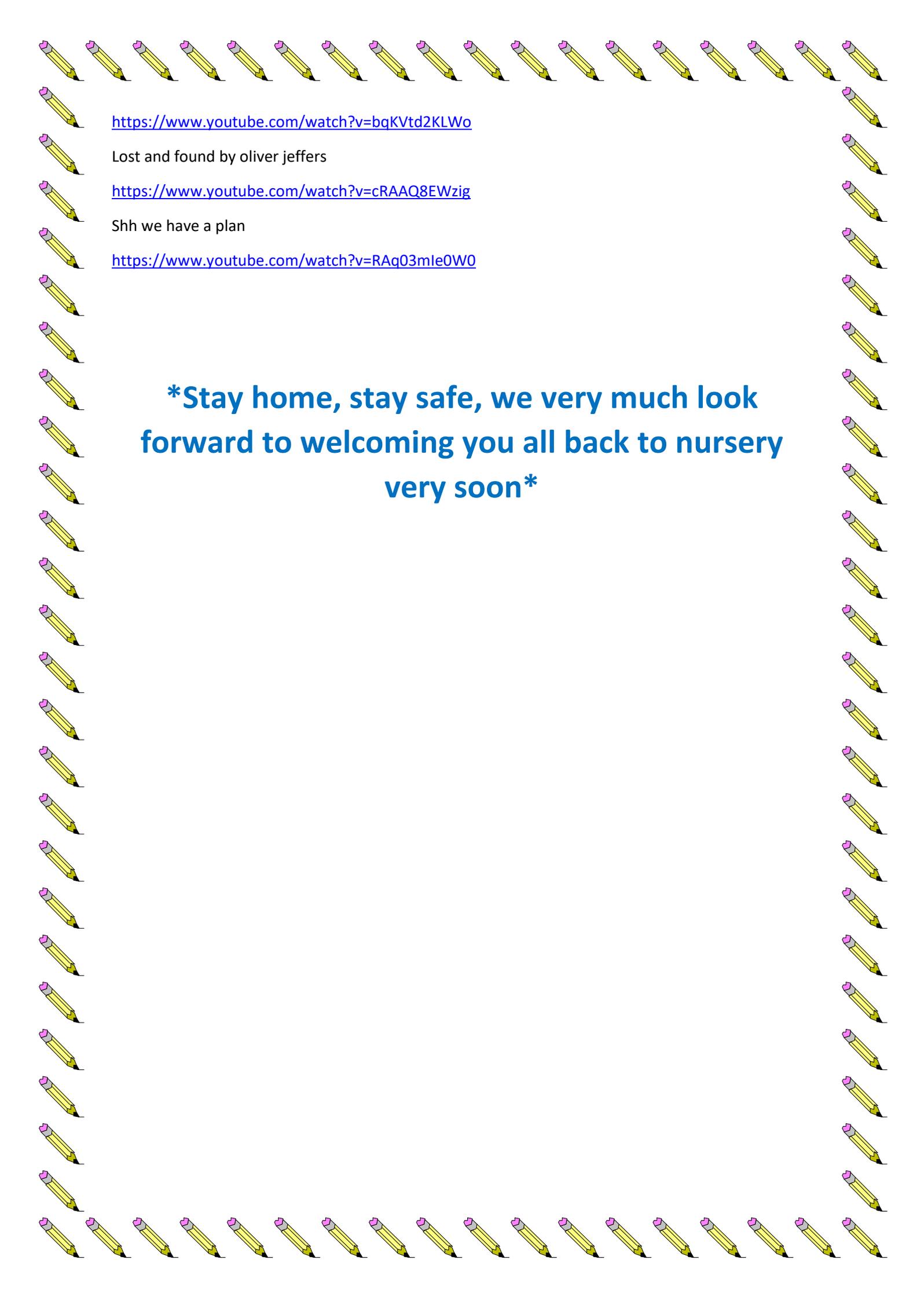
Monkey Puzzle by julia donaldson - children's story read aloud by this little piggy

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GzMWFZPqw4

A squash and a squeeze - written by julia donaldson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xFTGakzEIA>

Stick man by julia donaldson



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqKVtd2KLWo>

Lost and found by oliver jeffers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRAAQ8EWzig>

Shh we have a plan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAq03mle0W0>

Stay home, stay safe, we very much look forward to welcoming you all back to nursery very soon