

ACTIVITY GUIDE

Music Cushion



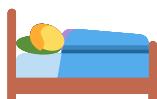
OBJECTIVE

To create a soothing, sensory-rich experience for children by combining music or audio stories with a tactile cushion.

The Music Cushion activity promotes relaxation, aids in winding down during nap time, and supports auditory engagement, helping children feel calm and secure.

PREPARATION BEFORE THE ACTIVITY

1. Set Up the Environment



Find a quiet space for the activity, ideally where children usually nap or relax.



Arrange soft blankets, pillows, or mats around the area for children to comfortably lie down and enjoy the Music Cushion.



Consider dimming the lights or drawing the curtains to create a more calming atmosphere.

2. Combine with the Magic Tent (Optional)



If using the Magic Tent, place the Music Cushion inside the tent, where the relaxing sounds and starry lights can work together to create a multisensory experience.

STEPS DURING THE ACTIVITY

1. Introduce the Music Cushion to the Children



Explain that they will have a chance to relax on a special cushion that plays soothing sounds or music. Or there will be educational audio material which can be heard from the music cushion. Emphasize that this is a quiet time for them to listen and feel comfortable.



If using it as part of nap time, let them know it's a moment to unwind and rest.

2. Start the Audio and Help Children Settle In



Connect the USB stick to the Music Cushion, and start the audio. Adjust the volume to a gentle level that is audible but not too loud.



Encourage each child to find a cozy position, either lying down or sitting with their head resting on the cushion.

3. Encourage Quiet Reflection and Relaxation



Guide the children into a calm mindset by asking them to close their eyes, take a few deep breaths, or listen closely to the sounds coming from the Music Cushion.



Use quiet phrases to enhance relaxation, such as,

LET'S CLOSE OUR EYES
AND LISTEN TO THE
GENTLE MUSIC

or

IMAGINE WE ARE STAR GAZING
AS WE LISTEN TO THE SOUNDS.

4. Optional Combined Activity with the Magic Tent



If using the Magic Tent, place the Music Cushion inside and let the children experience the starry night lights alongside the soothing music. This can help deepen their sense of calm and create a magical, immersive space for rest or daydreaming.

5. Transitioning Out of the Activity



When the audio ends, gently let the children know that it's time to finish relaxing. Use soft encouragement to bring them back to the current moment, saying something like:

LET'S SLOWLY OPEN
OUR EYES AND STRETCH

WHEN YOU'RE READY, YOU
CAN SIT UP AND TAKE A
BIG, CALMING BREATH



Give them a few moments to adjust before moving on to the next activity, especially if it's nap time.

Tips for Teachers and Volunteers



Pacing and Duration: For younger children, a short 5-10 minute audio session might be enough. For older children, you may extend this to 15-20 minutes, depending on their comfort level and the purpose (e.g., nap time versus general relaxation).



Adjust Based on Child's Comfort: Not every child may want to lie down with a Music Cushion right away. Encourage them to try it at their own pace, and let them know they can sit beside it if they prefer.



Creating Consistency: If using the Music Cushion regularly, consider using the same music or sounds each time. This helps children associate the specific audio with relaxation, creating a predictable and calming routine.



Observe Sensory Reactions: Watch for any reactions that may indicate discomfort or overstimulation, especially for younger or more sensitive children. Adjust the audio or environment as needed to ensure the experience remains gentle and enjoyable.



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