

# Has Your Bag of Tricks Sprung a Leak?



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# Introduction

Working with children everyday involves many activity changes that lead to changes in momentum, learning styles and approaches. To be successful, a teacher has to be prepared to handle these transitions , both planned and unplanned, without disruption in the daily scheduled routines. This means being able to handle events to keep the learning moving in a consistent flow. What we will look at today, is ways to have on hand prepared resources to meet this activity goal.



# What IS A Bag of Tricks?

A “Bag of Tricks” is a collection of ideas and props used to help keep the learning momentum continue when unplanned events occur and prepare for planned activity changes.

Some of the planned transitions such as arrival, departure, going outside, coming inside, going to lunch, restroom, centers or any of the normal routine activities.

Some of the unplanned events such as unexpected guests, fire drills, assemblies or other special events can disrupt the normal routine if something isn't in place to prepare for them.

Early childhood teachers learn to expect the unexpected as a part of the daily routine. Working with young children teaches us to look at all the possible situations that could occur and prepare for them, thus the creation of the Bag of Tricks.



# Contents of a Sample Bag of Tricks

The contents of your “bag of tricks” will vary according to the age group you work with. These are the basic components of my bag of tricks.

- Attention Getters - train whistle, clapper, acoustic frog, cow bell, megaphone, pom poms, cheers.
- Time fillers - file folder stories, puppets (hand and stick), big books, chants, rhymes, song can, Got A Minute activities.
- Management props - sock balls, transition cards, greeting apron, sensory bottles, quiet lotion, talking stick, magic wand, bubbles, telephones, oatmeal box, treasure boxes, microphone, plastic lids.



# Resources to Create Your “Bag of Tricks”

- Management Props – transition tips and tricks can be found at [drjean.org](http://drjean.org). This also includes handshakes, cheers and other ideas to help prepare props to use. Other props and ideas can be found at A to Z teacher stuff; preschool printables, Oriental Trading, Dollar Tree , Garage sales, from parents and community assistance.
- Peepers – P.O. Box 632; Flat Rock, NC 28731 (828)693-0879. (\$1.75 each).
- Stick Puppets were made from Frog Street Press Clip Art cd. The theme books and big books were also from Frog Street Press.
- Got A Minute ideas come from free teaching material downloads found at [senteacher.org](http://senteacher.org), preschool printable, Hubbard's Cupboard, [childcareland.com](http://childcareland.com) and others. Dry erase crayons are now available to help make wipe off cards to use in short time activities.

*The other items you use to make your bag is up to you . It can include strategies that you already have in place or ideas you find useful from this session.*

