

engineering

Make a bed for a teddy

Lesson at a glance

Hold up one small teddy with nowhere cosy to sleep and ask what he needs. Name the maker idea orally: think who we help, then build. Children feel boxes, fabric and tissue at tables, choosing soft pieces and a box that fits their toy. They build a simple bed in two short stretches with a mid-stop fit-and-cosy check. Close with pair-share stems — I helped... Teddy needed... My bed is cosy because... — then a few voices to the class. No Investigation Journal today.

Learning objectives

- Make a simple cosy bed for a small toy from boxes, fabric and tissue
- Say who the make helps and what little problem it solves

Before the bell – prep

Gather recycled boxes, fabric scraps and tissue the day before; keep open envelopes or shallow classroom tubs as stand-ins if boxes run short. One small soft toy per child or pair. Pre-tear short tape strips onto table edges. Round-tip scissors stay with adults only; glue sticks optional for light layers.

**Materials**

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
small cardboard boxes (shoe-box size or clean recycled food boxes)	1	pupil	brought from home	open large envelopes or shallow plastic tubs from the classroom
fabric scraps (soft cloth pieces)	3	pupil	classroom	old clean socks, cut-up t-shirts, or soft paper towels
tissue paper	2	pupil	classroom	kitchen roll or newspaper lightly scrunched
sticky tape	1	group	classroom	masking tape or glue stick for light paper layers
round-tip scissors	2	class	classroom	teacher pre-cuts any openings needed so children need no scissors
small soft toys (teddy or similar)	1	pupil	classroom	a sock puppet, a small doll, or a laminated toy picture stood in the bed

Safety watch-point

Round-tip scissors stay with adults only. Mind little fingers when children close or fold boxes; tape strips pre-torn on table edges reduce crowding.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Hold one soft toy beside an empty space or box. Keep the hook to one problem and one smile-question: What does teddy need? Accept kind answers, name the problem in plain words, and do not hand out materials yet. Use a home toy's name if children brought one.
- **Who are we helping?:** With teddy in hand, ask Who are we helping? and What does teddy need? Then model aloud once: I wonder what he needs... a soft bed... a box that fits, then fabric. Rest him briefly in an empty box with one scrap so children see fit and soft — leave the bed unfinished so they still have something to solve.
- **Feel the cosy materials:** Put boxes, fabric and tissue in the middle of each small-group table. Children touch and try only — no sticking yet. Guide with Is this fabric soft? Does this box fit your toy? Would tissue make a good blanket? Praise noticing soft, cosy pieces over shiny or stiff ones.
- **Make a bed for teddy:** Run two short builds with a one-minute mid-stop: hold up one unfinished bed and ask Does the toy fit? What could make it cosier? Start everyone on soft layers; many beds need little or no tape. Call pairs for tape or adult cutting in turn while others fold and stuff. Go round with one assessment question: What did you put at the bottom?
- **Show and snuggle:** Pair-share first so every child finishes one stem with the toy in the bed: I helped... / Teddy needed... / My bed is cosy because... Then invite a few short voices to the front or tables. Say once more: makers think about who they help before they build. Invite one kind friend comment on softness.

What it should show

Expect a simple bed or nest the toy can sit or lie in, with at least one soft fabric or tissue layer, and the child able to point to who it helps. Beds that feel hard or oversized usually need scrunched tissue as a quick mattress; gently prompt What could you add so teddy feels cosy?

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Children rush straight to decorating the box without checking whether teddy fits.** — Pause the build and bring teddy back to the box: Does teddy fit and feel cosy? Only then add more layers or decoration.
- **Children choose only shiny or stiff pieces and miss the soft materials.** — Put a soft scrap in their hand beside the stiff one and ask which would feel cosy for sleep. Praise the soft choice aloud.

**Differentiation**

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Offer a pre-chosen just-right box size and one soft scrap already to hand so the child only places teddy and adds tissue. • Stay at the teacher table and model the stem I helped teddy before they try it.	• At the mid-stop, prompt one extra soft layer or a tissue mattress and ask why it feels cosier.	• Compare two fabrics and say which feels cosier, then add a pillow scrap, second blanket, or tiny cushion for early finishers.

Cross-curricular hook

Ties to Aistear/oral language: pair-share stems practise full who-help-because sentences with a real audience.

