

engineering

Make a bed for a teddy

Lesson at a glance

Hold up a small soft toy with nowhere cosy to sleep and ask what teddy needs. Name the maker idea orally: think who you help, then build. Children feel boxes, fabric and tissue to find soft, right-size pieces, then make a simple bed or nest in two short build bursts. 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; the real bed and the talk are the record.

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

Day before: gather recycled boxes, fabric scraps and tissue; keep open envelopes or shallow tubs as stand-ins. Set one small soft toy per child or pair. Pre-tear short tape strips on table edges. Round-tip scissors stay with adults only.

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 closing box lids; pre-tear tape so children are not fighting the roll.

**Teaching moves**

- **Getting Started:** Hold one soft toy beside an empty box. Keep it light: one problem, one question — What does teddy need? Accept any kind answer, name the problem in plain words, and do not hand out materials yet.
- **Who are we helping?:** Children answer who we help and what teddy needs first. Then model aloud with the toy: choose a box that fits, add one fabric scrap, say soft and snug means cosy. Leave the model unfinished so their makes stay their own.
- **Feel the cosy materials:** Short station burst only — materials in the middle of each table, touch and try, no sticking yet. Guide with Is this fabric soft? Does this box fit? Praise noticing soft pieces over shiny or stiff ones.
- **Make a bed for teddy:** Two build bursts (about 6 minutes, 1-minute stop, 5 minutes). At the stop hold up one unfinished bed: Does the toy fit? What could make it cosier? Default soft layers first; call pairs for tape while others fold and stuff. Children press tape, scrunch tissue and place the toy to check fit.
- **Show and snuggle:** Brief pair-share so every child finishes one stem with the toy in the bed, then invite a few short voices. Say once more: makers think about who they help before they build. Invite one kind friend comment on softness.

What it should show

Most beds will be a simple box or nest the toy can sit or lie in, with at least one soft fabric or tissue layer. Children should point to who it helps and say the bed is cosy because it is soft or snug. A bed that is empty and hard usually skipped the soft layer — prompt scrunched tissue as a quick mattress. A bed far too big usually skipped the fit check — rest teddy in and resize with folds or stuffing.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **I just want to stick on shiny bits and decorations.** — Gently bring them back with the toy in hand: Does teddy fit, and does it feel cosy? Praise one soft layer before any decoration.
- **Any box will do — size does not matter.** — Rest teddy in their box and ask: bigger or smaller than teddy? Model choosing a box that fits before adding fabric.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Offer a pre-chosen just-right box and one soft scrap so the child only stuffs, places teddy and says who it helps.	• At the mid-way stop, prompt one change: What could you add so teddy feels cosier? (extra tissue mattress or a folded blanket).	• Add a pillow scrap, second blanket layer or tiny cushion, and tell a partner why that makes it cosier for this toy.

Cross-curricular hook

Oral language stems (I helped... / Teddy needed...) practise simple recount in English without any writing.