



A HAPPY PARADE

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

Children develop new vocabulary as they learn about parades. They have the opportunity to think creatively as they use a variety of materials to participate in their very own parade. Children also develop executive function skills as they plan out their parade.

After Otis saves the calf from Mud Pond, Otis, the calf, and other members of the farm community march down the dusty road to the village. The group looks like a happy parade. Children can create their own parade and dress up like the characters from *Otis*.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A copy of Loren Long's *Otis*
- Posters and banners for the parade (put words like "Hooray!" or images of the calf and Otis on the posters)
- Small flowers to throw (cotton balls or other soft confetti materials could work in place of real flowers)
- Find items that will work well as dress-up clothes for the parade such as: Overalls, boots, flannel shirts, hats, firefighter uniforms, loose fabric and empty boxes to create tractor and calf costumes

WHAT YOU'LL DO

Introduce children to the pretend play by showing them the page with the illustration of the parade. Explain that a parade is a group of people and vehicles that moves slowly and in celebration. Parades happen when people have a happy occasion to celebrate. Parades usually involve some posters or banners, and people often throw confetti or flowers. Let children know that there are a variety of materials available for them to use to create their own parade today.



HOW IT'S DONE

1. Collect materials for the parade and set up a play area by arranging a space in a way that invites creativity. Display materials so that children can easily access them.

2. Encourage children to use their imaginations to think about which characters in the parade they would like to be.

3. Help children find posters to carry or flowers to throw, just like the people from the farm community did in *Otis*.

4. As a group, decide what route the parade should take. Will the parade march through the classroom or event space?

5. When the parade is ready, lead children through the parade route. Maybe there is some special-occasion music you can play or a song that you can sing as you march.

THE END

Conclude the parade by reminding children that a parade is a group of people and vehicles that moves slowly and in celebration of a special occasion. Otis and the calf marched in a parade to the village when Otis saved the calf from Mud Pond, and today you marched in a parade, too.

VOCABULARY LIST

Banners | Celebration | Occasion | Parade | Posters | Route | Vehicles

TALKING TIPS

Participate in the pretend play and follow children's lead in activities and conversation. If children introduce a new idea or parade activity, pick it up and go with it!

Use detailed descriptions and rich language to acknowledge children's comments, extend what children have said, and describe what you are doing during this play.

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