

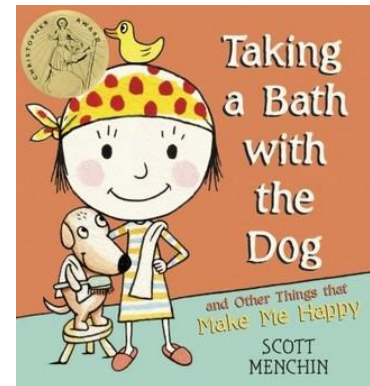


Taking a Bath with the Dog: And Other Things That Make Me Happy

by Scott Menchin

“What do you do when it seems as if nothing will make you happy? For one little girl, it’s a good time to take a survey from all sorts of characters to get their ideas.” – Goodreads.com

Introduce the story to the children by explaining that everyone feels sad, grumpy, or angry sometimes. Remind children that it’s okay to feel these feelings, but we know that they are uncomfortable, and there are things we can do to start feeling happy again. At the end of the book, children can share some things that make them happy when they are feeling upset.



Have a centre with provocations related to things that make the different characters happy. For example:

- Bubbles and bath toys in the water table
- Magnetic numbers and wood cookies
- A variety of string and ribbon at the art table to mimic hair
- Dirt in the sand table for digging
- A variety of materials and textures with striped patterns for children to explore

Dramatic Play

Have puppets of each character from the story in the dramatic play area for children to re-enact the story. Include the things that make each character happy (e.g. a toy bathtub for the dog puppet). Ask the children if they would like to do a live performance.

As a second idea, have a large bucket of shoes for the children to explore—see who shows an interest in shoes like the snake/worm in the story.

Use the attached images to create a memory matching game. Match the character with the activity (e.g. the picture of the bat matches the image of the child hanging upside-down).

Gross Motor

The rabbit in the story is happy when he runs around. Play a variety of running games in the gym or outside:

- Red Light, Green Light
- British Bulldog
- Tag
- The Screaming Game (children run as they let out one long scream, and stop when they “run out of scream”)
- Running with kites, ribbons, flags, scarves, etc.

Music

Sing/play the following songs about happiness (there are many others not listed! Use your favourite!):

- **If You're Happy and You Know It** – children's song
- **Keep on the Sunny Side** – children's song
- **Happy** by Pharell Williams
- **Don't Worry, Be Happy** by Bobby McFerrin
- **The 59th Street Bridge (Feelin' Groovy)** – Simon & Garfunkel
- **Walking on Sunshine** – Katrina and the Waves



Include Families!

Let families know that you are talking about ways to feel happy when upset. Give each family member sticky notes to write one thing that makes them happy; put them all on a whiteboard for your room or centre.

Share Backpack Connection Series tip sheets about how families can help their child understand and label emotions.



Memory Match Game

