Picture-led learning through play

For preschool learning, not a written test. Use the pictures in a small group or one-to-one. Children may point, gesture, talk in home languages, move objects, draw or simply watch. No reading, numeral writing, completed grid or uniform woven product is expected.

EYLF V2.0 links: Outcome 4: curiosity, experimenting and finding ways to solve problems through hands-on materials. Outcome 5: sharing meaning through gesture, talk and drawing; noticing repeated arrangements and using spatial language. Outcome 2: listening to an identified maker and discussing care for materials and place. These are planning connections, not evidence that every child has achieved an outcome.

Invitation: Choose one picture and one activity. Offer 5–10 minutes, then follow children’s interest. Begin with familiar objects and revisit ideas over several days. Wide paper strips, a safe shallow basket and large soft objects are enough.

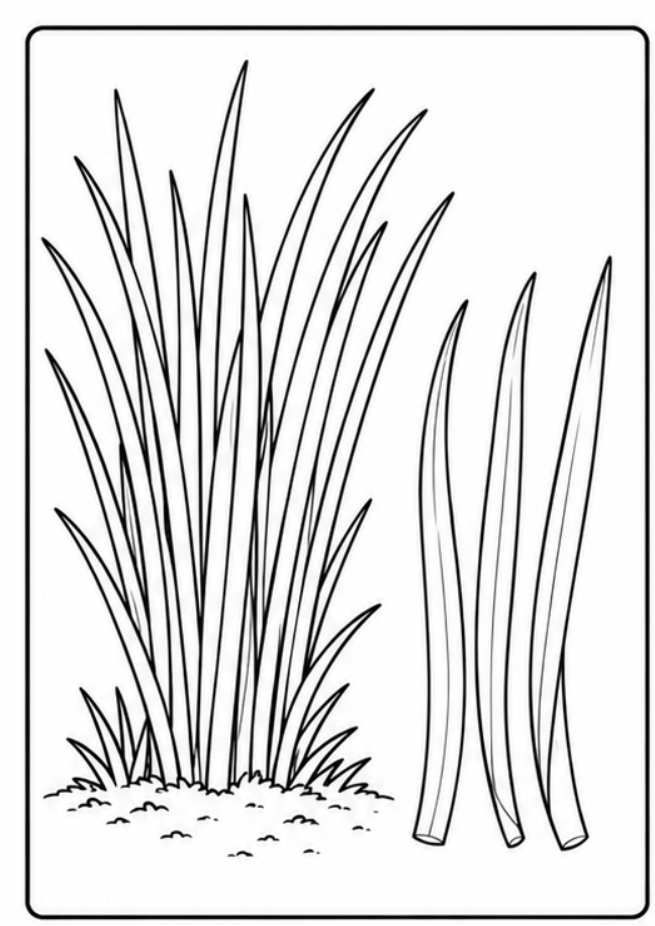
Responsive support: For children needing simpler entry, explore in/out with a basket or match two strips. For interested preschoolers, model a short repeating arrangement and invite them to change it. Younger children require a separate sensory invitation and close supervision; this pack is designed for ages 3–5.

Cultural connection: Show a publicly shared work by a named maker or organisation. Say who made it and where they are from, using their own information. Ask what children notice. Arrange learning with an appropriate local practitioner when possible. Generic cartoons and paper play are not instructions for Aboriginal cultural weaving.

Preparation and safety: Educator cuts wide strips. Use large materials without sharp edges, loose loops or choking hazards. Do not collect plants. The plant drawing is a discussion illustration, not a species guide. Children can decline touching or making.

Observe rather than score: Record the child’s words, gesture, strategy or question; your support; and a possible next invitation. Link what actually happened to the relevant EYLF outcome. See the observation page for examples.

Look at the leaves



Look and talk: Point to a long leaf. What do you notice?

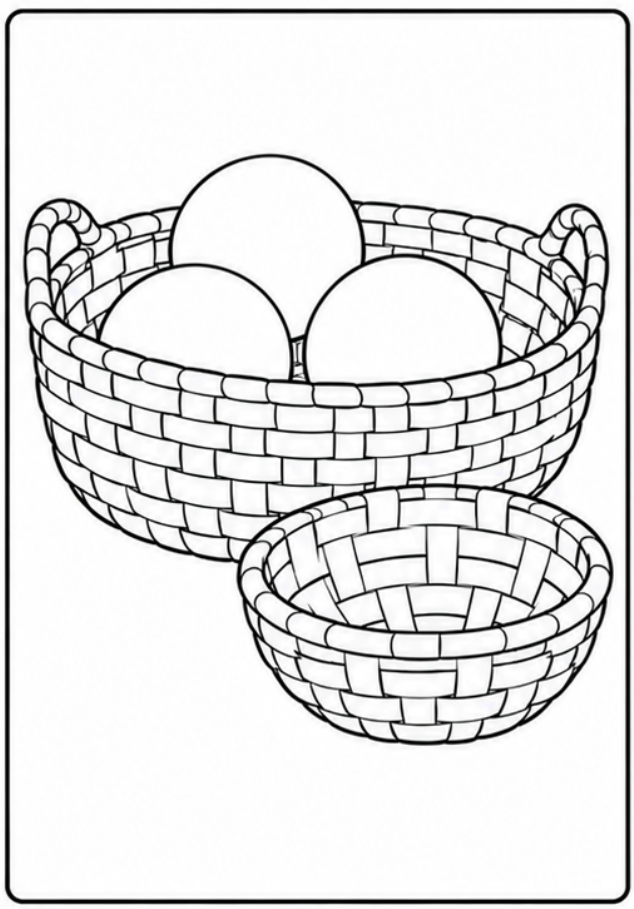
Play invitation: Offer wide paper strips of two lengths. Let children line up, curve, match or sort them. Model “long”, “short”, “bend” and “beside”. No correct arrangement is required.

Follow the child: Which strip reaches further? How could we check?

Educator observation link: Outcome 4: investigation with materials. Outcome 5: describing and comparing through talk or gesture.

Generic AI-generated discussion picture. Colouring is optional; talk, movement and play are the learning.

What could this bowl hold?



Look and talk: Which basket is empty? What could go inside?

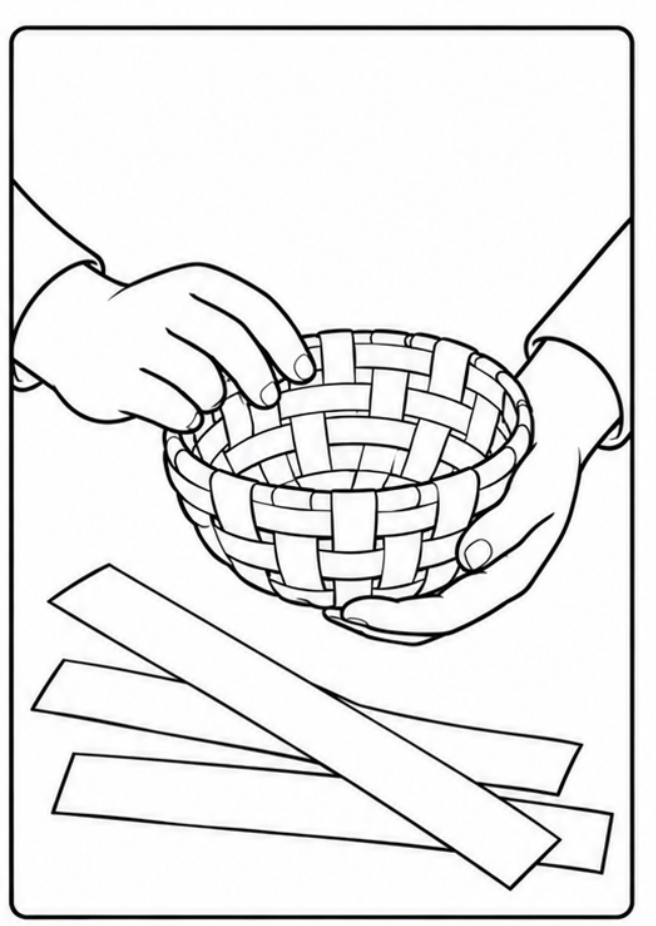
Play invitation: Offer a safe basket and three large soft balls or fabric bundles. Children place them in, take them out, share them or compare full and empty. Count together only when the child shows interest.

Follow the child: Where will that go? Is there room for one more?

Educator observation link: Outcome 4: problem solving in play. Outcome 5: spatial language, quantities and shared meaning.

Generic AI-generated discussion picture. Colouring is optional; talk, movement and play are the learning.

Hands can explore and make



Look and talk: What are these hands doing? What might you try?

Play invitation: Offer wide paper strips on a table. Children feel, bend, cross or arrange them. An educator may model one over-and-under crossing if invited. Let the child change the idea; no finished basket is expected.

Follow the child: Can your strip go over mine? What else can it do?

Educator observation link: Outcome 4: experimenting and persisting. Outcome 5: action, gesture and explanation.

Generic AI-generated discussion picture. Colouring is optional; talk, movement and play are the learning.

Make a pattern together



Look and talk: What could these children say to each other?

Play invitation: Start a two-part arrangement using wide paper strips: upright, across, upright, across. Invite a child to continue, change or make their own. A child can also copy a movement pattern with arms.

Follow the child: What do you notice? What might come next? Show me your idea.

Educator observation link: Outcome 4: predicting, testing and revisiting. Outcome 5: noticing repetition and communicating ideas.

Generic AI-generated discussion picture. Colouring is optional; talk, movement and play are the learning.

Look closely: someone made this



Start simply: “This is a close-up photograph of a woven object. A person made it.” Invite pointing: “What catches your eye? Can you follow a fibre with your finger in the air?”

Connect with a maker: Pair the photograph with a named maker’s publicly shared work or an invited practitioner. Tell children only what the maker or source shares. Ask, “What would we like to ask the person who made it?”

Respond: Offer a safe basket to explore, or wide paper strips. Children can draw what they noticed, talk, gesture or choose to watch. Avoid asking them to reproduce the pictured technique.

Photo: Bronwyn Cochrane/TIPIAC, Kakadu NT, 11 June 2022. Maker and plant species are not identified. Location alone does not identify the maker or community. EYLF connections: Outcomes 2, 4 and 5, according to the observed experience.

Notice the learning

Child / group: _____ Date: _____

Picture / invitation chosen: _____

What did the child say, gesture, make, notice or try?

_____

_____

What support did I offer? What helped the child participate?

_____

_____

Which EYLF outcome connection is supported by this observation?

_____

_____

What could we offer next, following the child's interest?

_____

_____

Examples, not a checklist: Aligning strip ends to compare lengths may show investigation (Outcome 4). Pointing and saying "inside" may show communication (Outcome 5). Asking about a named maker or discussing careful material use can open connections to Outcome 2. Document context and avoid judging a child from a single activity.

Framework: ACECQA – EYLF V2.0 outcomes information sheet. Also consult Belonging, Being and Becoming V2.0 (2022). These adaptable invitations do not replace service planning or local cultural guidance.

Public cultural sources: Tjanpi Desert Weavers and Bula'bula Arts. Confirm maker, place and what may be shared. Generic illustrations created with AI for TIPIAC; no cultural motif is copied. Revised 14 October 2026.