CURIOUS BRIAN’S

Home Activities

A printable guide for parents and carers



Simple experiments and nature activities to explore together at home.

Wonder together

These activities are invitations to notice, try, talk and play. There is no test, no perfect answer and no pressure to finish.

Inspired by Tom Tom and Curious Brian • Tom Tom Universe

A gentle guide for grown-ups

Curious Brian loves asking questions and noticing small details. These activities use everyday materials to explore science, sound, light and nature together. Your child can join in by doing, watching, choosing, communicating or simply being nearby.

Let the child lead

Offer a choice of activities and let your child set the pace. They can take a break, change the plan, repeat a favourite step or stop. Watching counts as taking part.

Making activities accessible

- Show the materials first and explain what will happen, one step at a time.
- Offer choices: do it, watch, direct, take a photo, draw, write or talk.
- Use your child's preferred communication. Give extra thinking time and accept gestures, pointing, AAC or quiet observation.
- Adjust for sensory preferences: lower sound, reduce mess, change the lighting or use a dry alternative.
- Keep the activity short if that works best. A few minutes of shared curiosity is plenty.

Safety and supervision

An adult should supervise all activities and choose materials suitable for the child. Keep water shallow and supervise closely. Keep small objects, rice and other choking hazards away from young children and anyone likely to mouth them. Do not shine torches into eyes. Do not taste activity materials. Wash and dry hands after activities. When observing nature, watch wildlife without touching or disturbing it.

A simple pattern to follow

Choose an idea. **Wonder** what might happen. **Explore** together. **Notice** what changes. **Pause** or stop whenever needed.

1. Build a paper bridge



You'll need

Two sturdy books, a sheet of paper and a few larger safe objects to test (for example, a soft toy or chunky blocks).

Try it together

- Place the books a short distance apart to make two supports.
- Lay the paper across them. Try it flat first, then fold it like a concertina.
- Add one object at a time and notice how the bridge changes. Stop if it begins to bend too much.

Curious Brian wonders…

Which paper shape held more? What could you change and try again?

Make it work for your child

Your child can choose the objects, fold the paper, watch, or tell you when to add something. Use larger objects if small pieces are not suitable.

Safety note

Keep the books stable and use only light objects. No climbing or leaning on the bridge.

My guess / what I noticed / what I wonder

_____

_____

2. What will float or sink?



You'll need

A shallow bowl of water, a towel and a few clean, water-safe objects large enough for the child's age and needs.

Try it together

- Look at one object and make a guess together: float or sink?
- Place it gently in the water and watch what happens.
- Take it out, dry it if needed, then choose another object.

Curious Brian wonders…

Were you surprised? Did objects that looked similar behave differently?

Make it work for your child

If water is uncomfortable, sort objects into "might float" and "might sink" groups without testing. Your child can point to a guess or watch from a dry spot.

Safety note

Keep the water shallow and supervise continuously. Keep small objects away from young children and anyone who may mouth them.

My guess / what I noticed / what I wonder

_____

_____

3. Follow a shadow



You'll need

A small torch and a simple toy, plus a wall or large sheet of paper.

Try it together

- Place the toy where it can make a shadow on the wall or paper.
- Shine the torch towards it from a comfortable distance.
- Move the torch a little closer or further away and notice the shadow change.

Curious Brian wonders…

What happens to the shadow when the torch moves? Can you make it bigger or smaller?

Make it work for your child

Keep the room comfortably lit and let your child choose whether to hold the torch, move the toy or simply watch. Stop if the light feels uncomfortable.

Safety note

Never shine the torch into anyone's eyes. Use a clear space and keep the torch away from water.

My guess / what I noticed / what I wonder

_____

_____

4. Watch ice melt



You'll need

One ice cube, a plate and a towel or paper towel. A timer is optional.

Try it together

- Place the ice cube on the plate. Notice its shape and feel the cool air nearby without needing to touch it.
- Look again after a few minutes. What has changed?
- Watch the water collect on the plate and dry the table afterwards.

Curious Brian wonders…

Where did the water come from? What changed first?

Make it work for your child

Your child can watch from a distance, use a timer, draw the ice or ask an adult to handle it. Stop if cold or wet sensations are uncomfortable.

Safety note

Do not taste the ice or water. Avoid prolonged skin contact with ice; dry hands and surfaces to prevent slips.

My guess / what I noticed / what I wonder

_____

_____

5. Listen for vibrations



You'll need

A bowl, cling film secured by an adult and a few grains of rice—or larger paper pieces as a no-choking-hazard alternative.

Try it together

- An adult stretches cling film tightly across the bowl and places the chosen pieces on top.
- Make a gentle sound nearby, such as a quiet hum or soft tap on the table.
- Watch closely to see whether the pieces move. Try a quieter or slightly different sound if comfortable.

Curious Brian wonders…

Can you see the pieces move? What changes when the sound changes?

Make it work for your child

Sound can feel intense. Keep it quiet, let the child control the start and stop, or skip the sound and explore the setup by looking.

Safety note

Adult supervision is needed. Keep cling film and rice away from young children and anyone who may mouth them. Do not use loud sounds or tap the bowl hard.

My guess / what I noticed / what I wonder

_____

_____

6. Start a tiny nature watch



You'll need

A window or outdoor spot. Paper, pencils or a camera are optional.

Try it together

- Choose one small thing to notice: a bird, cloud, plant, insect or patch of sky.
- Look closely for one detail, such as a colour, shape or movement.
- Look again later. Has anything changed? You can draw, photograph or simply remember it.

Curious Brian wonders…

What did you notice that you might have missed before?

Make it work for your child

Looking from indoors counts. Your child can choose the subject, point, use a camera, dictate a note or just watch quietly.

Safety note

If you go outside, supervise as usual. Observe wildlife from a respectful distance and do not touch animals, insects or unfamiliar plants.

My guess / what I noticed / what I wonder

_____

_____

Curious Brian’s discovery notes

Use this page in any way that suits your child. They can write, draw, stick in a photo, dictate their ideas or leave it blank and talk together.

Today I chose…

Activity: _____

Before we tried it, I thought…

_____

_____

While we explored, I noticed…

_____

_____

Now I wonder…

_____

_____

How did it feel?

- ■ Just right
- ■ Exciting
- ■ Messy
- ■ Noisy
- ■ Relaxing
- ■ Not for me today
- ■ Something else: _____

There is no wrong way to be curious. You can try again another day, change the activity or choose something new.