

# Reading Assignment

*A Day in the Life of an Open-Ended Material*



# A Day in the Life of an Open-Ended Material

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Hello! Let me introduce myself. I am a bottle cap. I live on a shelf in the house area in the HighScope Demonstration Preschool in a canister with about 60 other different bottle caps. I lead a very interesting life. In fact, thanks to those active preschoolers, my life is one big adventure. Just this morning, you might say I was very popular with those little humans.

It all started when two little girls mentioned that they were going to use me in their plans. “We’re going to have a birthday party,” one of them told Sue, their teacher. “Yeah,” said the other, “we’re gonna make cupcakes for the party.” Sue inquired,



“Cupcakes? Yum! What will you use to make them?” The girls looked over our way, and one said, “The bottle caps and the pans.” So here we go...

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After the girls put on a suit coat, a skirt, and scarves from the collection of dress-up clothes, they were ready for the party preparations. They came over and took me and my buddies off the shelf. They plopped us into some muffin tins and put us in the play oven. After about ten seconds, we were pronounced “Done.” Over to the table we went, where we were served to several partygoers who had gathered. Soon, three children pretending to be puppies joined the party. Down into the dog dish I went. Apparently, in the preschool, puppies enjoy cupcakes, too!

After the puppies pretended to eat us, they crawled over to the block area, where several block builders had constructed a large train using the hollow blocks. The puppies sniffed around the train for a bit and then helped to add features to the train. One puppy went to the book area and brought

back a large, soft pillow so he would have a comfortable place to rest. Another puppy got some of those same scarves that the birthday party girls were wearing and added those to the train for blankets. The last puppy came over and got the dog dish, with us bottle caps still sitting inside, and slid us in one of the hollow blocks. (You never know when you might get hungry on a long train ride!) While the block builders put the final touches on their train, two other children were also in the block area using the small unit blocks and little people figures. They were using the blocks for furniture for their house. One child spotted us bottle caps peeking out from where we had been placed by the puppy. He came over and scooped a handful of us out of the dog dish and brought us over to the unit blocks. “Look,” he said, “These could be their beds.” He placed each one of us on a square block and carefully placed a figure on each

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of us. “Shhhh,” his playmate said, “they’re all sleeping now.”

While this was happening, I noticed that some of my pals who had remained in the cannister were now being brought over by one of the younger children. She dumped the cannister over and began stacking these caps. First, she stacked them up and knocked them over, laughing when they tumbled and fell. She did this several times, each time stacking the bottle caps a little higher. Then she went to the toy area and brought back the bin of small cars. She stacked up the caps again, this time using a car to knock them over.

The children who were using us as beds decided to wake up their figures. Then they took some of the figures to the water table for a swim. The boy came back to the block area and picked me up, along



with a few of my friends. “Hey,” the girl said. “It’s a boat!” She placed one of the figures inside a cap, and together we bobbed on top of the water. The children soon made a game of seeing how many boats (a cap with a figure balanced on top) they could get floating at once. “One, two, three, four, five, six!” the girl counted. “No, one fell,” said the

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boy. “One, two, three, four, five.” “Let’s make ‘em all fall,” the girl giggled. “Yeah, let’s make ‘em all fall,” the boy agreed. Together, they splashed and made waves in the water table until all of us caps were bobbing and all the people figures were sinking slowly to the bottom.

Next, someone came by and announced it was five minutes until cleanup time. Whew! This usually means a break for us. When those five minutes went by, we were scooped out of the water and shaken hard to get the water out of us. At the teacher’s suggestion, the children placed us on a paper towel on the counter so we could dry out. From this vantage point, I noticed that some of my colleagues were now being tossed, one at a time, back into the cannister as if they were basketballs.

The children at the table by me sang a song about recall time. Before I could properly dry out, one of those two little birthday party girls grabbed me and put me in something called a recall bag. She brought me back to her group and took me out of the bag and shared how she used me to make cupcakes for the party. Then I was returned to the counter so I could finish air drying. I stayed there for the remainder of the morning.

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