

# Creating for

 YouTube Kids



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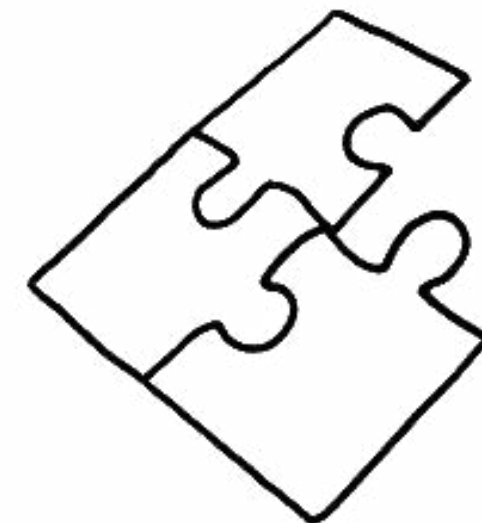
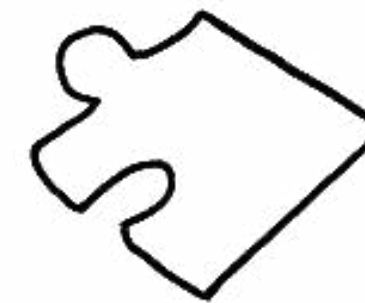
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# Rules of the Road



 YouTube Kids

Make something awesome





# A Note to Creators

## Welcome, YouTube creators!

Congratulations on using your powers of production to create enriching, engaging and inspiring content for one of the most exciting – and challenging – audiences out there: families. We have created a world-class platform that is ideal for you to show off your content: YouTube Kids. We want to make sure that you know how you can best contribute to this platform designed especially for families and kids of all ages.

## So, where to begin?

Well, it starts with the youngest member of the family. As YouTube Kids is used by more families all over the world, now is the time to make content that is appropriate for the whole family, including the youngest members of the team, to help ensure that it is eligible for YouTube Kids. But don't stop there. Think about

how you can make the very best content for children. Can you connect with parents? Appeal to older siblings? Give the whole family something to talk about at the dinner table *together*?

## No small task

That's why we\* are sharing this handy Field Guide to help you on your journey. It will cover key Dos and Don'ts, and loads of tips to create content that is eligible for YouTube Kids and to Understand, Engage, Enrich and Impress your viewers. There are also more than 80 great videos. And links. And extraneous doodles.

Creators, don't go out into the woods alone. Take this Field Guide. Read it, watch it, play it, live it. Make something awesome for YouTube Kids.

*Obligatory Legal Stuff*

The tips in this field guide are designed to help you create programming that will be eligible for inclusion in YouTube Kids and resonates with family and child audiences, but they will in no way guarantee that your content will appear in YouTube Kids.

\* We = Leading experts in the fields of Family Media, Education and YouTube Kids stuff ... and a stinkbug named Bob. See Contributors for more details.





# To Dos

As you embark on your journey, make sure that you understand the rules of the road. There are many paths to creating content that is right for children and families. Here are a few to consider:



**Tip**

Take a look at the [YouTube Kids Parental Guide](#) for more to dos, including policies around [advertising](#) and [product placement](#).

*\* See Worksheet A*





# To Don'ts

There are some paths that you, as a smart, caring, grown-up person, should AVOID. No matter what your show is about: **Parents should feel SAFE and EMPOWERED** allowing their children to watch your content.



### Tip

Take a look at the common-sense rules in [YouTube's Community Guidelines](#) that'll help you steer clear of trouble. Please take these rules seriously and take them to heart. Don't try to look for loopholes or try to lawyer your way around the guidelines – just understand them and try to respect the spirit in which they were created.

**AVOID THESE EVEN BIGGER PITFALLS**

**IS YOUR SHOW:**

	YES	NO
<b>INVASIVE</b>		✓
<b>VIOLENT</b>		✓
<b>USING INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE</b>		✓

Do you invade privacy? Do you ask kids to do anything that's not OK with their families?

Is there gratuitous violence? Or unresolved conflicts? Are you modelling behaviour that you don't want kids to imitate?

Do you use language that would NOT be welcome in a child's home or school?



# To Don'ts

Here's another handy checklist to help you stay on course.

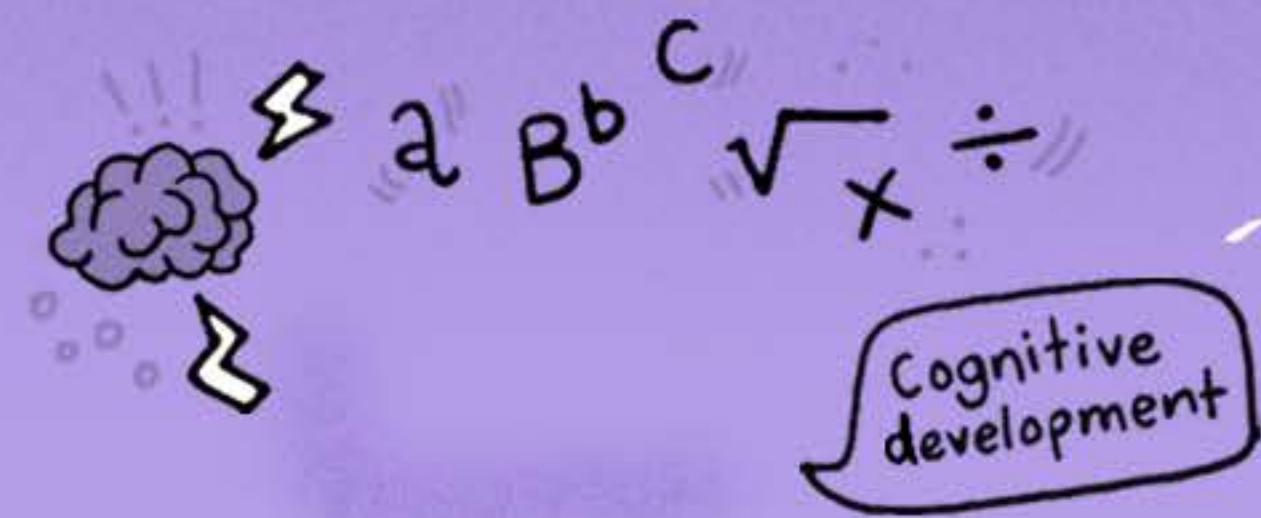
\* See Worksheet B

**KEEP YOUR SHOW ON COURSE**

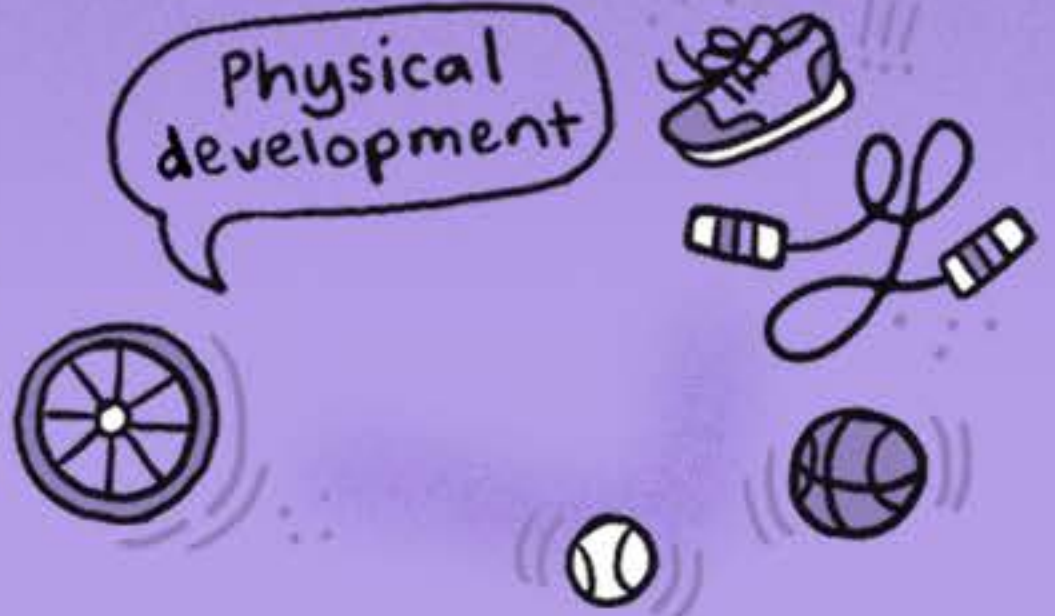
*Bob ☺*

*All "NO's please!"*

IS YOUR SHOW:		YES	NO
LEWD	Would you feel uncomfortable showing it to your mother? Your grandmother?		✓
INAPPROPRIATE ATTIRE	Are there elements in your scenes that could make your participants or some viewers uncomfortable (e.g. overly revealing attire showing bare skin or situations that could be misinterpreted)?		✓
SCARY	Will it cause nightmares?		✓
MEAN-SPIRITED	Would your characters be unkind to a shy 3-year-old?		✓
CONDESCENDING	Will kids feel belittled & less-than-smart watching it?		✓
IRRITATING	Will families just want to turn it off?		✓
MIND-NUMBING	Will it cause zombie eyes and a marked drop in IQ?		✓
OFFENSIVE	Does it include rude or inappropriate content about different types of people?		✓
CONFUSING	Will kids struggle to follow along?	<del>✗</del>	✓
DANGEROUS	Could kids get hurt by following your example? Do you remind kids what's <i>not</i> OK to try at home?		✓
BORING	Will kids prefer cleaning their rooms to watching it?		✓
JUNKY	Is the quality so poor it's hard to see and hear?		✓
OVER-STIMULATING	Will it give kids and families a headache?		✓
BIASED	Are your characters stereotypes? Will it be difficult for your viewers to relate to them? Is there a lack of diversity?		✓



Cognitive development



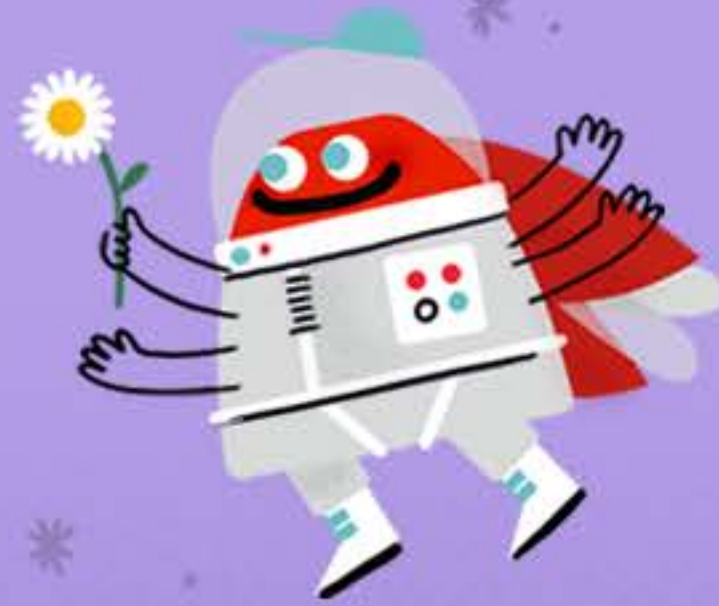
Physical development

Social-emotional development



Environment and experience

# Understand Your Audience



Funny bone development







## Understand Your Audience

Children have a vast array of cognitive abilities and interests – largely informed by their ages and stages of development.

The YouTube Kids audience is also culturally and geographically diverse. It's great to consider real children and families you know as you create your show, but bear in mind the wide range of children and families just waiting to be your loyal audience – if you create content that makes them feel welcome.

Think about not just how you can make content that is *eligible* for YouTube Kids, but about how you can make the best content for the diverse YouTube Kids audience.



### Resources

[ABC's of Child Development \(PBS\)](#)

[Child's Brain Development \(First5California\)](#)

[Developmental Charts \(Scholastic\)](#)

[Positive Parenting Tips \(CDC\)](#)



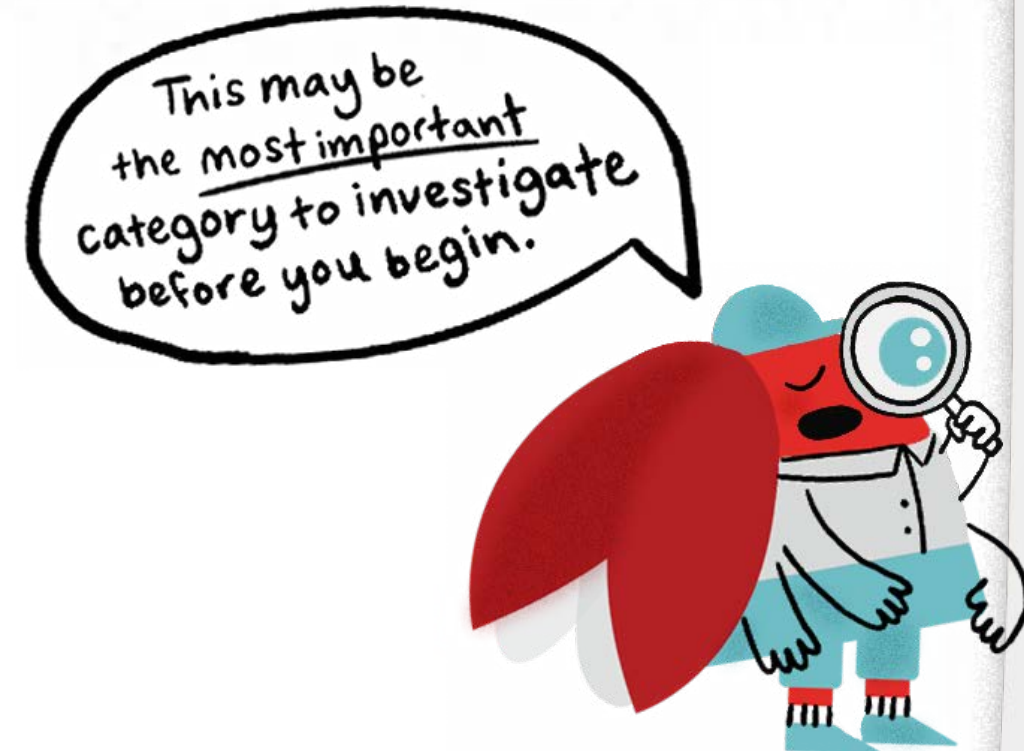

# How Kids Feel

## Social-Emotional Development

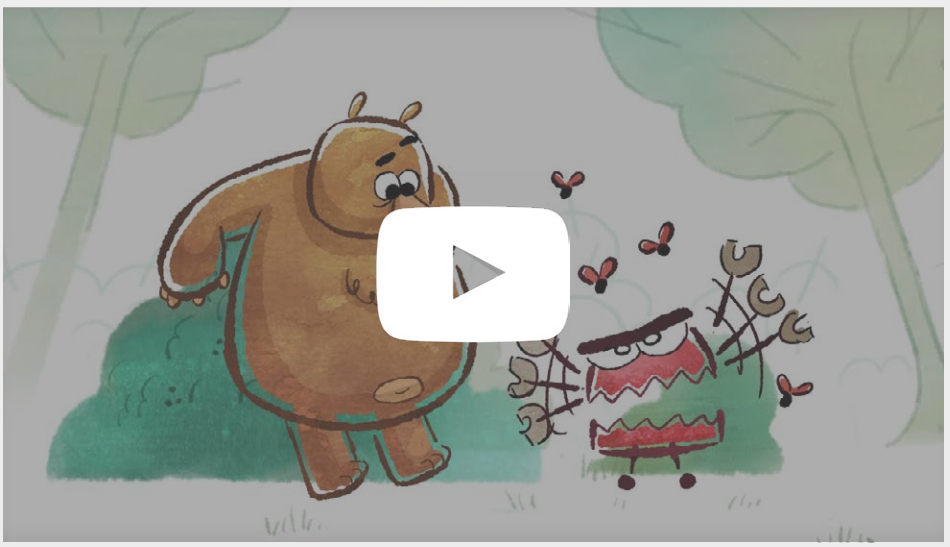
How will children feel about your show? It will depend greatly on the common social and emotional stages they experience as they grow.

What are their hopes and fears? How do they get along with others? How do they build confidence? How do they express and work through their feelings?


Whether it's modelling what to do if you and your friend *really, really* want the same toy or how to navigate peer pressure, understanding the social and emotional challenges your viewers face will help you make content that matters to them.

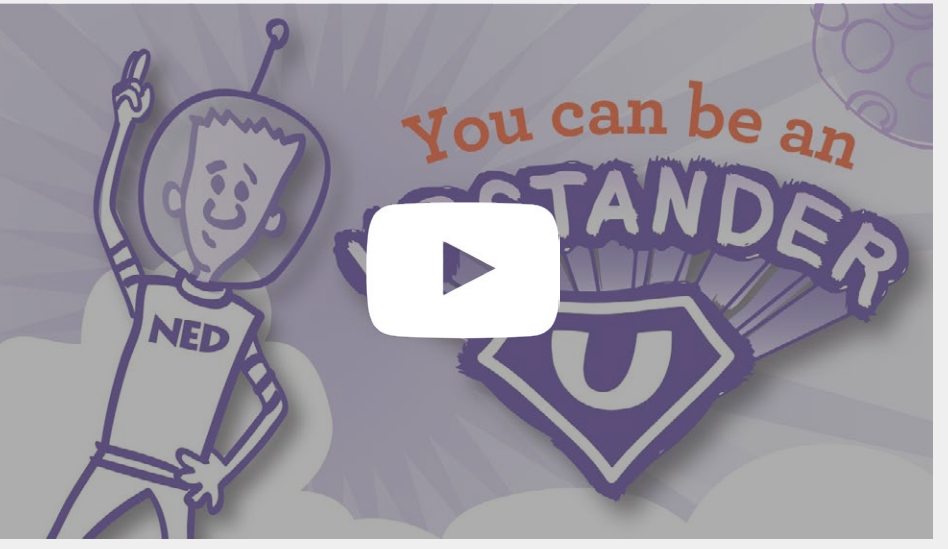
**The FuZees**  
The FuZees mapped each episode to social-emotional topics important to their preschool audience.



**StoryBots**  
*Grumpy* as a Grizzly Bear is part of a StoryBots series that explores feelings.



**Amy Poehler's Smart Girls**  
The Modern Manners series helps viewers navigate social interactions in the Internet age.



**The NED Show**  
*Be an Upstander* tackles the issue of bullying head on.

**Resources**

Preschooler (BabyCentre)	Life and Learning (Scholastic)
Early Learning and Dev. Standards (GELDS)	Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)



# How Kids Think

## Cognitive Development

Think about it. The last thing you want to do is make young viewers feel frustrated, confused, or even worse, dumb.

Familiarising yourself with the cognitive development of children can help you work out which words to choose, how high to count, how many steps to include in directions and how to tailor your content so that young brains can understand and absorb it easily.



### Resources

UK science curriculum

Performance Expectations (CRScience)

8 Mathematical Practice Standards (Scholastic)

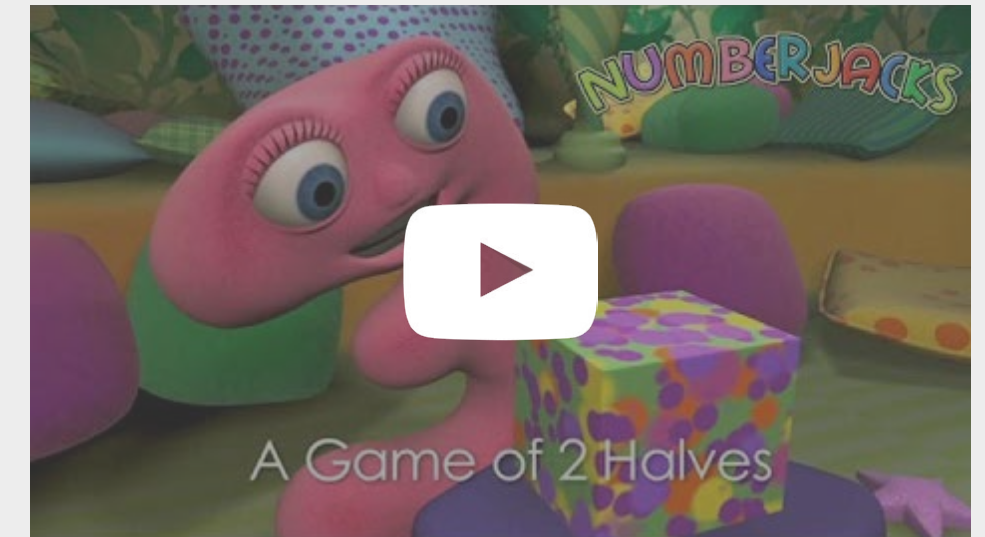
Project2061 Benchmarks (Project2061)

UK Mathematics curriculum



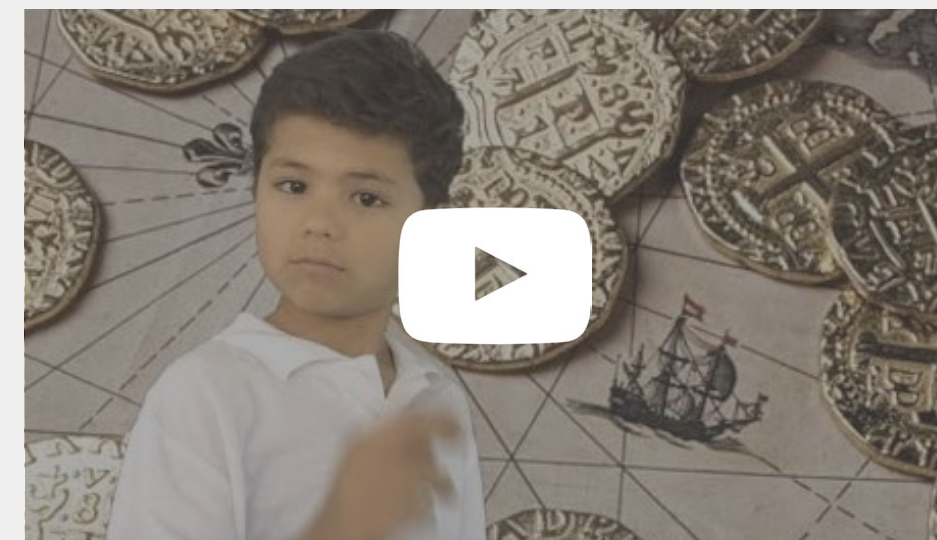
### SciShow/Why Do Bruises Change Colors?

SciShow tackles tricky science questions using accessible language and relatable examples.



### Numberjacks/A Game of 2 Halves

The Numberjacks solve maths problems in the real world at a preschool pace.



### A Kid Explains History/PIRATES

Mister Q delves into complex topics using language that kids like him can understand.



# How Kids Move

## Physical Development

How old are children when they learn to hop?

Do press-ups? Dribble a ball?

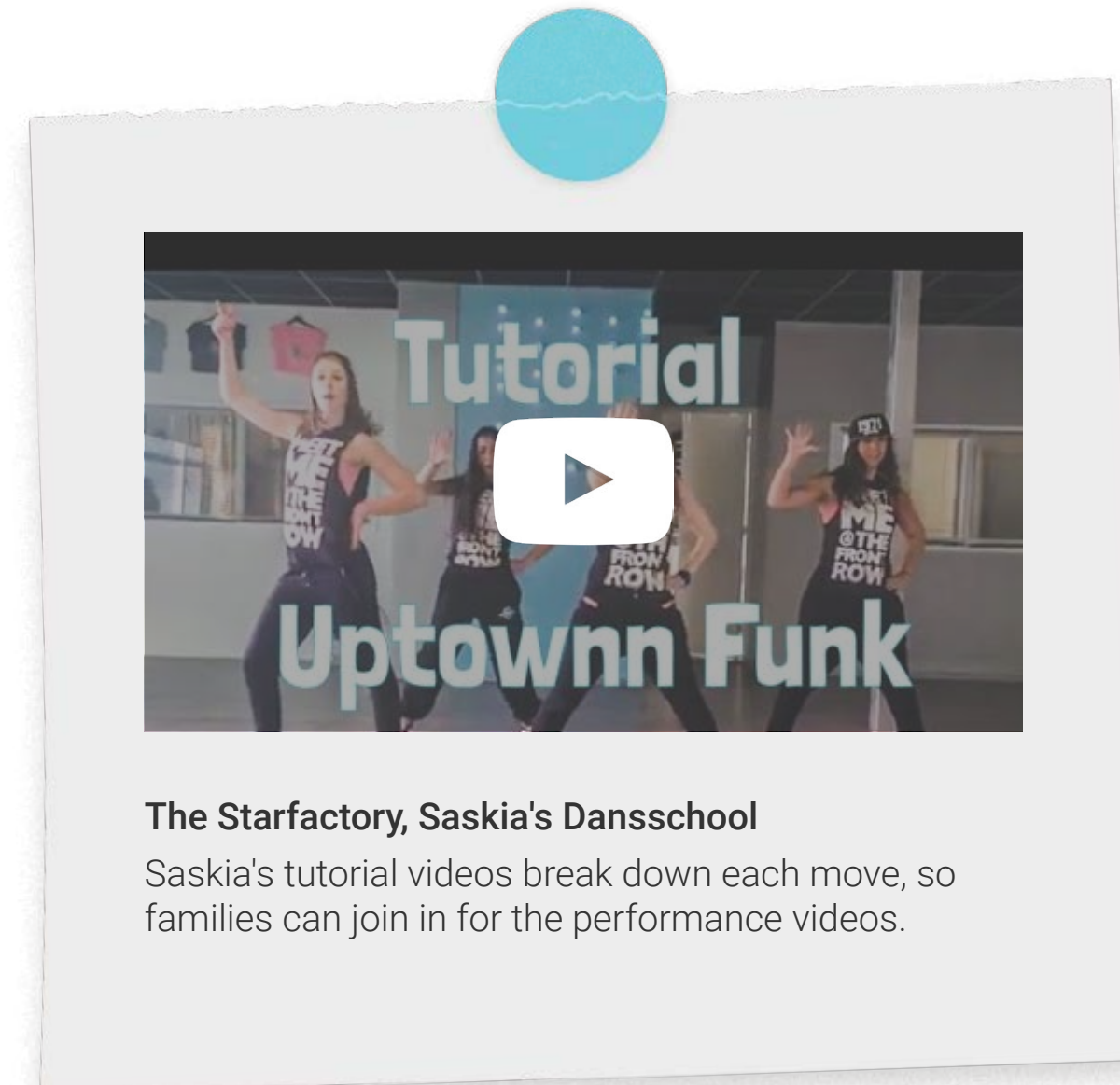
Getting kids moving is great, but expecting a preschooler to snap to the beat with her left hand will only lead to frustration. Understand what kids can do as they develop physically, so they can jump in. And remember to offer movement variations so family members with disabilities can get in on the action.



### Resources

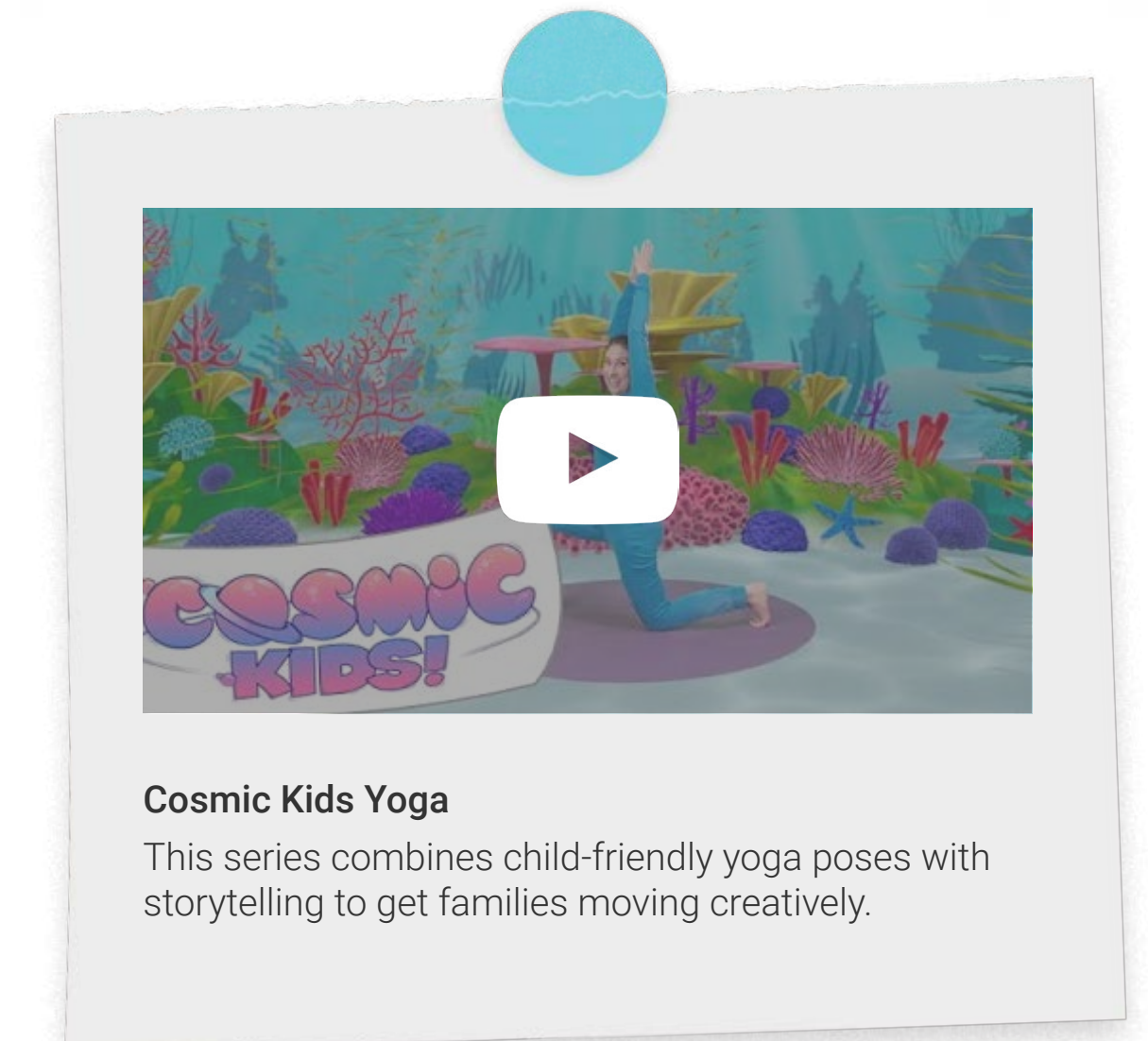
[UK PE curriculum](#)

[National PE Curriculum  
\(Association for Physical Education\)](#)



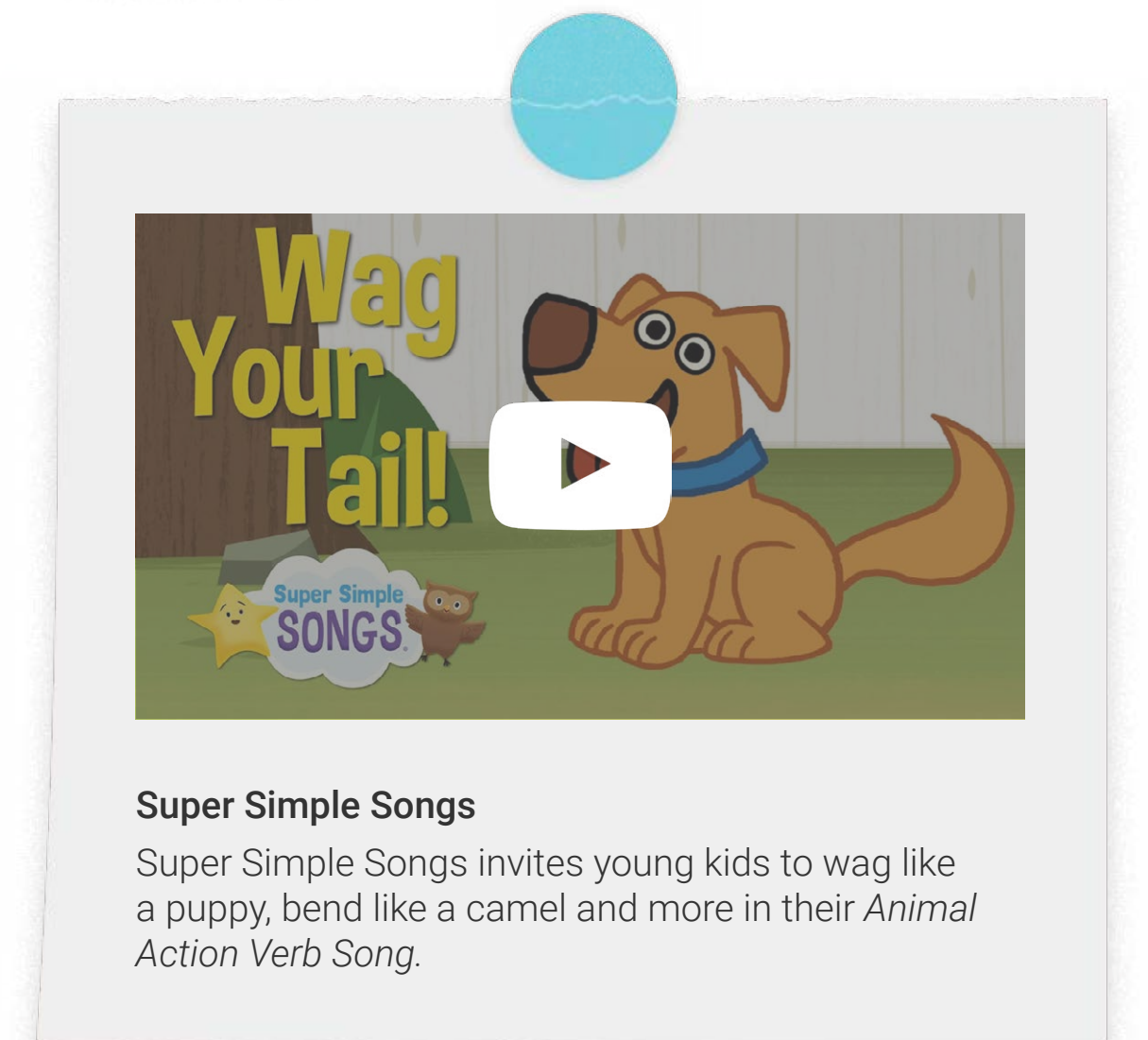
### The Starfactory, Saskia's Dansschool

Saskia's tutorial videos break down each move, so families can join in for the performance videos.



### Cosmic Kids Yoga

This series combines child-friendly yoga poses with storytelling to get families moving creatively.



### Super Simple Songs

Super Simple Songs invites young kids to wag like a puppy, bend like a camel and more in their *Animal Action Verb Song*.



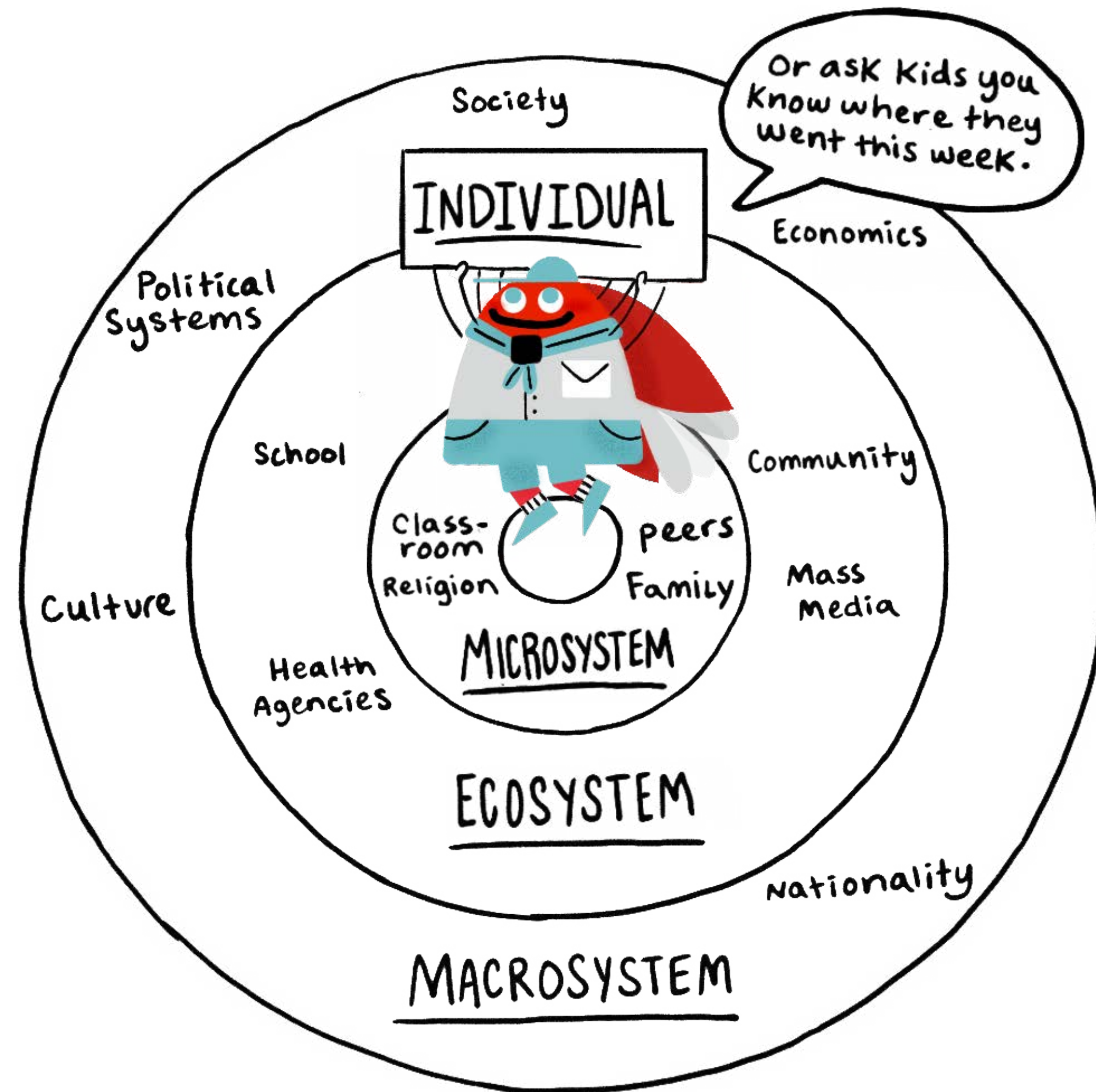
# How Kids Live

## Environment and Experience

### Expanding Environments

The world starts small. Familiar environments may begin with the home, the back garden and the playground.

As children grow, their worlds expand to places like school, sports fields and friends' homes. Understand the types of places that your audience is familiar with as points of reference. Here is a handy diagram based on the fancier one by developmental psychologist, Urie Bronfenbrenner:



Inspired by Bronfenbrenner's *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design* (1979).



## New Experiences

As kids grow, they will be exposed to more experiences – pretty basic, isn't it?

It's fine to introduce new (and fantastical) experiences in your show. That's part of the magic. Just remember that your 4-year-old child may not have a frame of reference for losing a tooth, or getting homework, or dealing with acne. And city kids may not know what an ear of corn looks like, just as rural kids may not immediately recognise the big, black car zooming across the screen as a taxi. Keep in mind where viewers are coming from, so that you can give them the set-up that they need to be part of *your* experience.



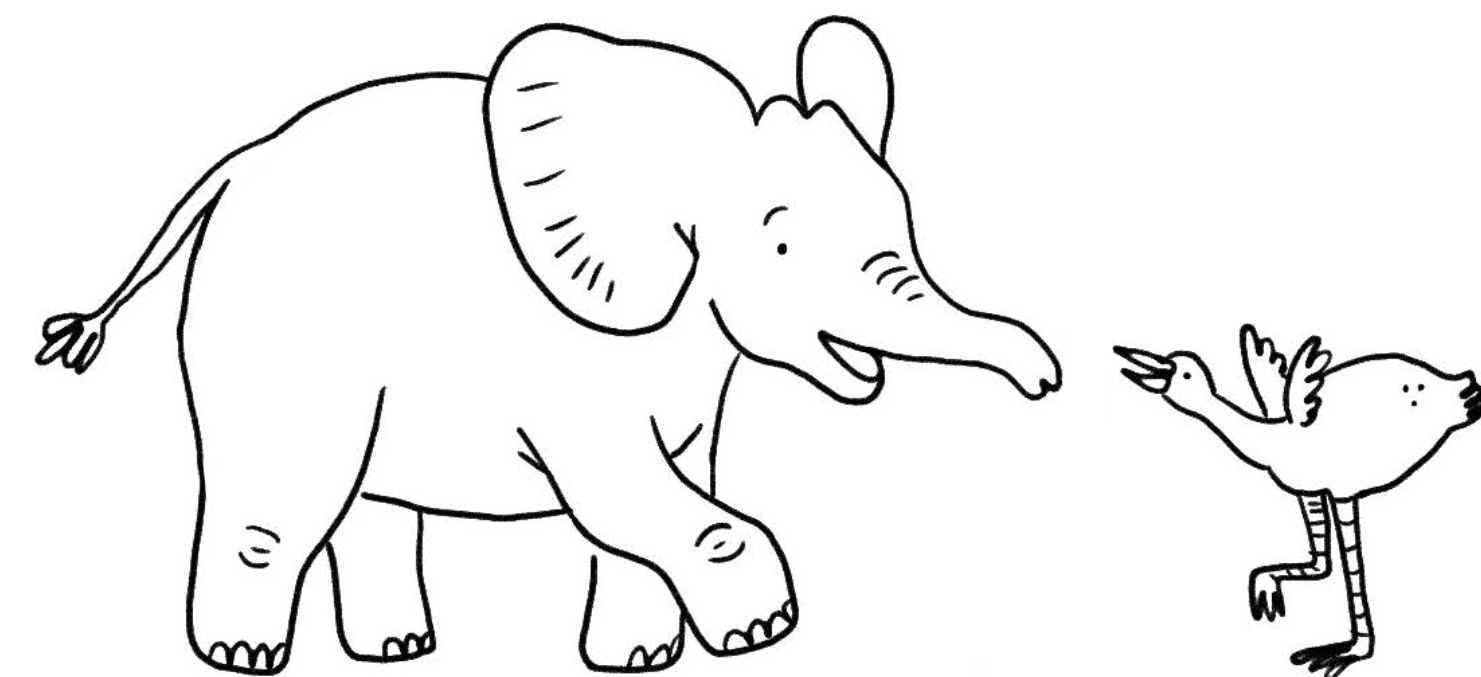
### Sesame Street

Sesame Street's urban setting is an important part of the show's mission to attract inner-city children and families to enriching content.



### TheBazillions/No Homework

This video speaks to a common experience of the primary school set.





## Where in the World?

Is your show a hit in India? Do Korean families get your humour? How about viewers in Ghana?

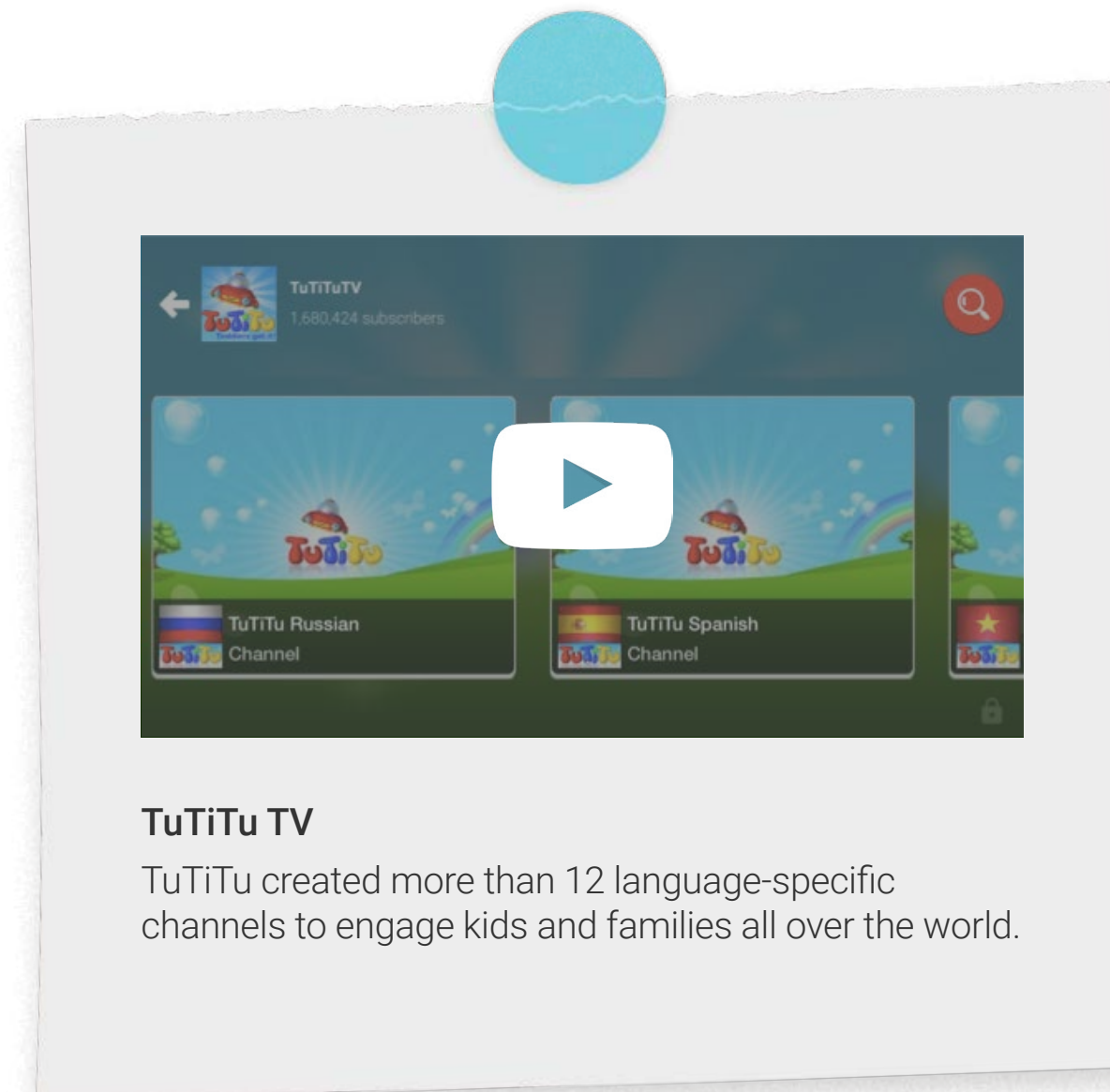
One of the most amazing and exciting aspects of creating a show on YouTube Kids is how far it travels. Try using [YouTube Analytics](#) to work out how to reach audiences around the world – whether by adding a character from another country or subtitles in another language, setting an episode in another neck of the woods or simply including a friendly greeting in another language. Tailoring your content to a global audience can inspire you to make adjustments, large and small, that will make your young viewers feel more welcome.



### Resources

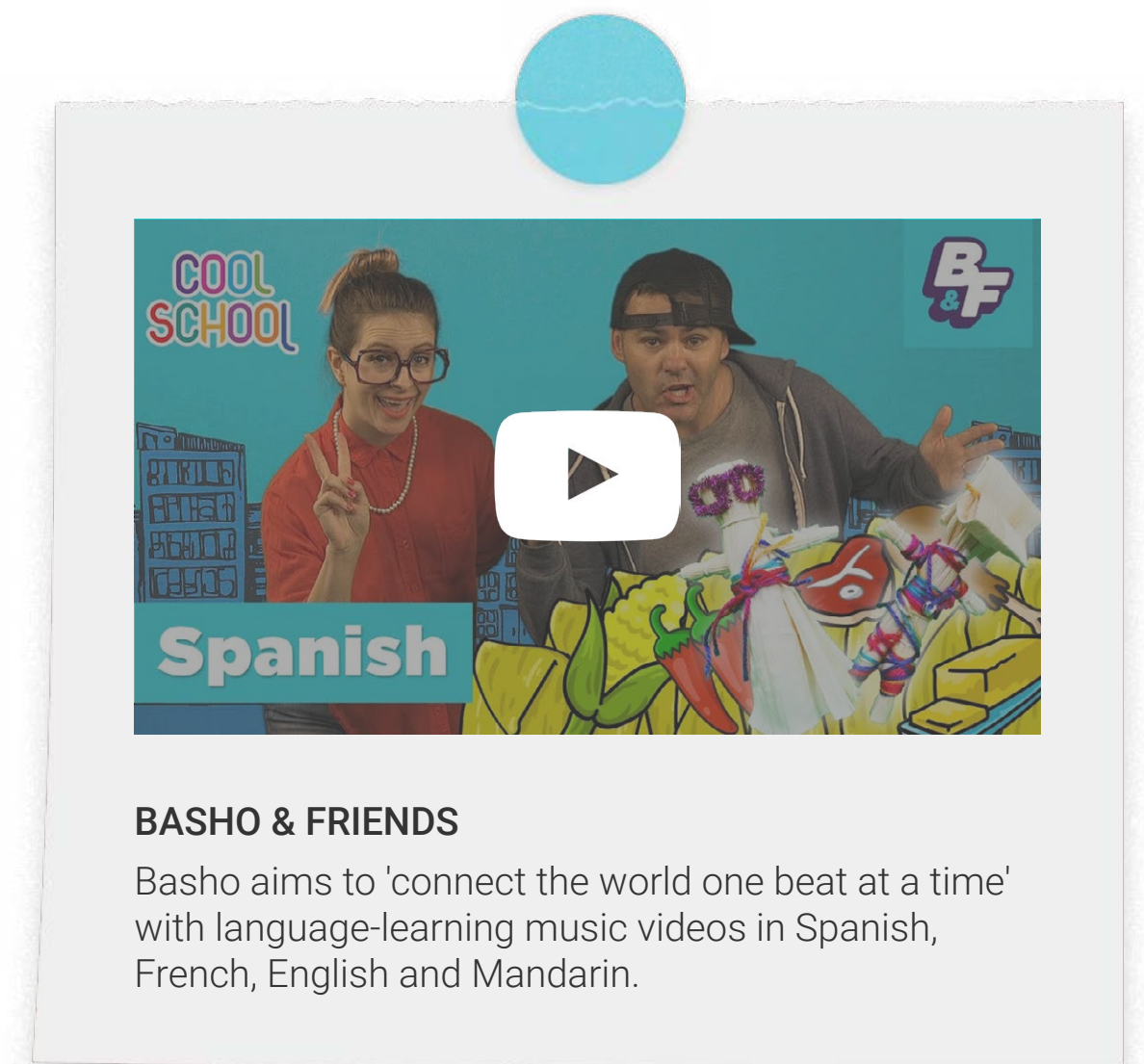
[Measure Your Success \(Creator Academy\)](#)

[Bronfenbrenner's Theory of Development \(Study.com\)](#)



### TuTiTu TV

TuTiTu created more than 12 language-specific channels to engage kids and families all over the world.



### BASHO & FRIENDS

Basho aims to 'connect the world one beat at a time' with language-learning music videos in Spanish, French, English and Mandarin.



# How Kids Laugh

## Funny Bone Development

Don't let your jokes fall flat, or worse – offend your audience. Or even worse, offend the parents watching with their kids. Or the parents of the parents. Or the uncle of the parents' parents.

Research the laugh-o-meter for your age range to welcome your viewers in on the joke. A preschooler might dissolve into giggles over funny sounds and spills, but deliver a stone-cold stare after a knock-knock joke. A 7-year-old might blow milk out her nose at that very same joke. And a 12-year-old has a sophisticated funny bone primed for puns, farce and pop-culture spoofs. Find the funny for your audience. And, if all else fails, try a perfectly delivered – 'MOOOOOO' – interrupting cow joke.



### Resources

[Laughing Matters \(ADDitudeMag\)](#)

[What's Funny to a Child? \(KidsHealth\)](#)



### Bounce Patrol Kids/20 Kids Jokes!

Bounce Patrol delivers family-friendly jokes with visuals, text and pacing to support young comedians.



### Bored Shorts TV/Kid Snippets/Fast Food

Kid Snippets gets inside child humour, literally. These sketches are developed and voiced by kids and performed by grown-ups with side-splitting results.



### Oggy and the Cockroaches/Sheepcat

Sometimes funny can reach the largest audience with the least number of words.





# Engage Your Audience





## Engage Your Audience

When travelling deep into the wilds of family content, there are some essentials that you will need to keep close at hand.

Some of these tips are as old as time. Some are specific to new media. This section of the Field Guide will help you keep your audience engaged – and eager for your next episode.





# Character

## Create Connections

Let's face it, we humans are social creatures. Creating interesting characters that children can connect with is key to creating great content. These can be fictional characters, yourself, real kids, sock puppets, or pet rocks. That is, as long as kids care about them.



## FIELD NOTES

### TITLE

Tips for Creating Characters  
That Kids and Families Care About

*Make Them Relatable*

*Make Them Imperfect*

*Go Beyond Stereotypes*

*Champion Gender Equality*

*Embrace Empathy*

*A Word About Kids in Videos*

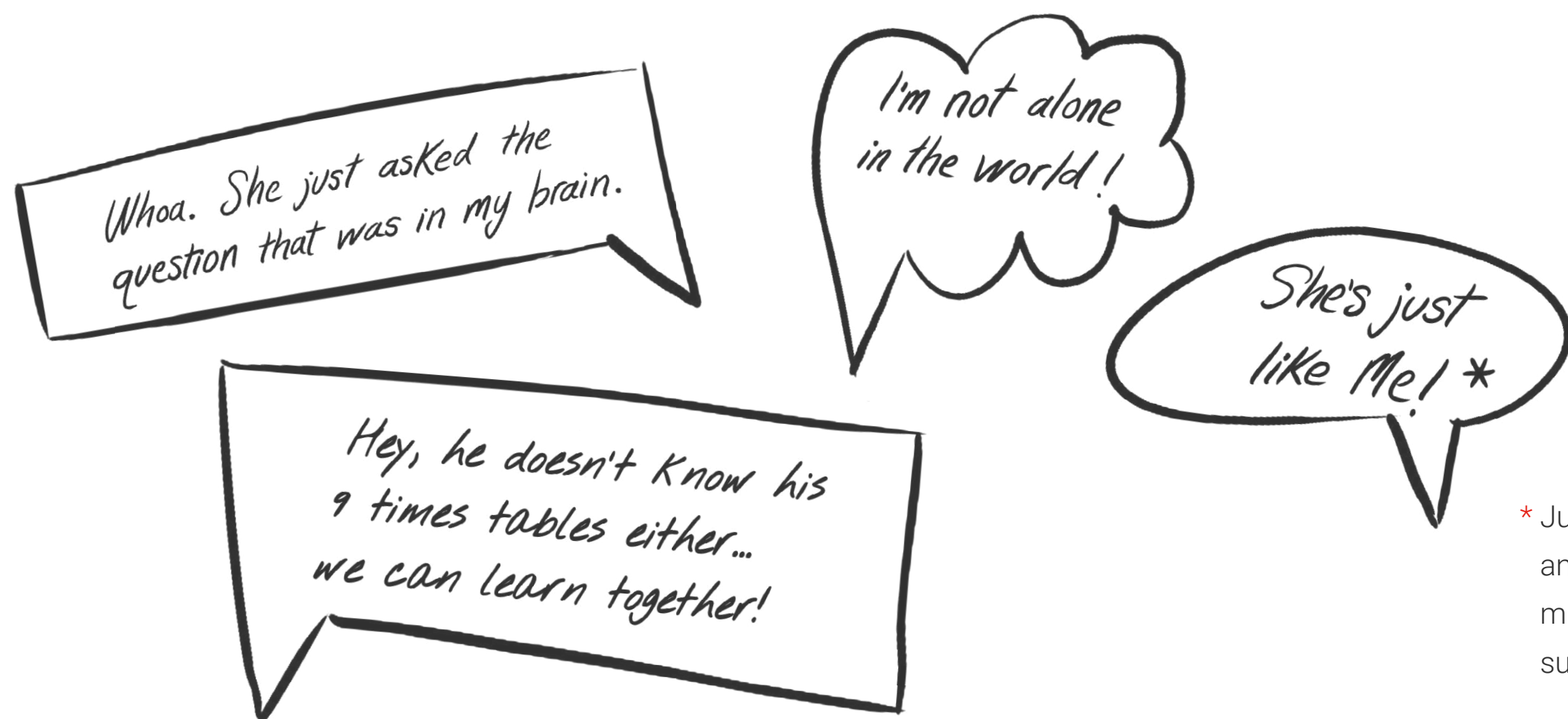


## Relatable and Imperfect Characters

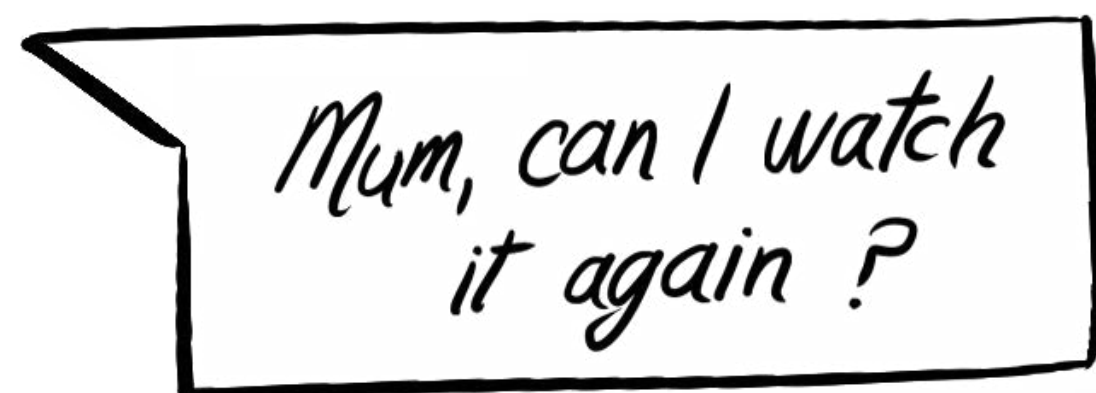
Think about interesting – and imperfect – characters.

Characters who have interests and quirks and hopes and fears that make them real. Characters who learn and grow along with your viewers.

Characters who might inspire some children to jump up and down and say:



Or, it may sound more like this:



\* Just like me – Your characters can have 3 eyes and spaghetti for hair. We are talking about the mind-meld, soul-sibling kind of connection – not superficial stuff.



**SoulPancake/Kid President**

Kid President embodies the relatable feeling that kids know exactly what to do – if everybody would just listen.



**Cool School/Crafty Carol**

Even hosts don't have to be perfect. Crafty Carol adds a wallop of geeky enthusiasm to the DIY format.



## Go Beyond Stereotypes

Great characters have depth.

Stereotypical characters like 'the bossy big sister' and 'the nerdy boy scientist' – *yawn* – tend to be one-trick ponies that do little to make your show memorable. Even worse, lazy character design can inadvertently perpetuate sexist, racist and other damaging '-ist' attitudes.

Characters make or break your show. Why would your viewers want to hang out with someone that they don't like? Take the time to create unique, multidimensional characters. Include characters with different backgrounds and abilities that reflect your diverse audience. In addition to promoting understanding, an interesting and diverse set of characters will make more families feel *more* included – and more interested in watching your show!



### Mother Goose Club Playhouse

After the success of its initial channel, Mother Goose Club, Sockeye Media launched a second channel as a way to show more – and more diverse – real people.



### SoulPancake/Why Some Muslims Don't Wear a Hijab

Both the interviewer and interviewee regularly go beyond stereotypes in the Have a Little Faith series.



## Champion Gender Equality

Aim for about 50/50 – just like in real life.

By short-changing female characters in number or quality, you are sending a subtle but powerful message to children and families that girls don't matter as much. Some simple tips for making sure that your show is gender-inclusive\*:

1. Review your script and change some of the characters until about 50% are female.
2. Add more girls/women to crowd scenes to reach about 50% female characters.
3. No need to feel limited in your character design – girls can do and be anything!



### Resources

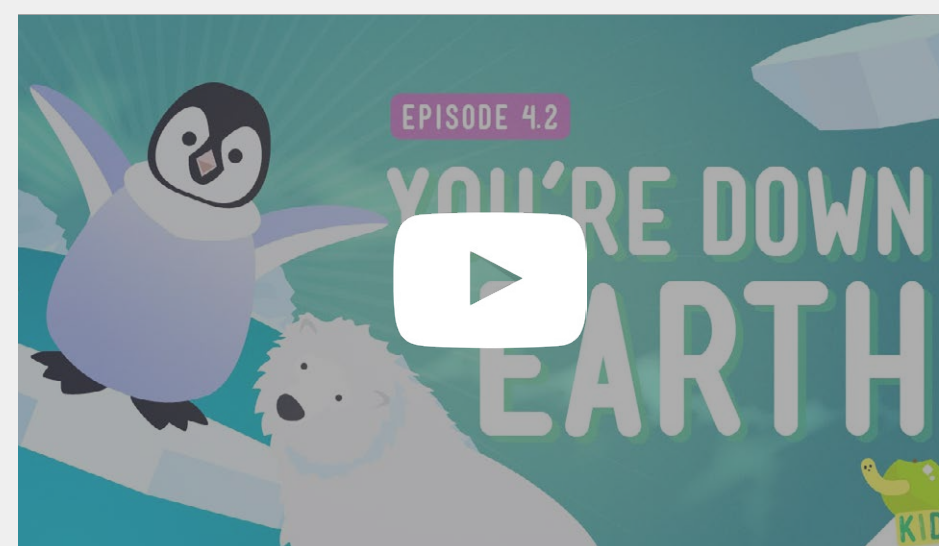
[Gender in Media \(SeeJane.org\)](http://SeeJane.org)

[Talking About LGBTQ \(HRC.org\)](http://HRC.org)

[How to Create Diverse Characters \(LatinosinKidLit\)](http://LatinosinKidLit)

[Mind the \(Diversity\) Gap \(JoanGanzCooneyCenter\)](http://JoanGanzCooneyCenter)

\* These handy tips are from SeeJane.org



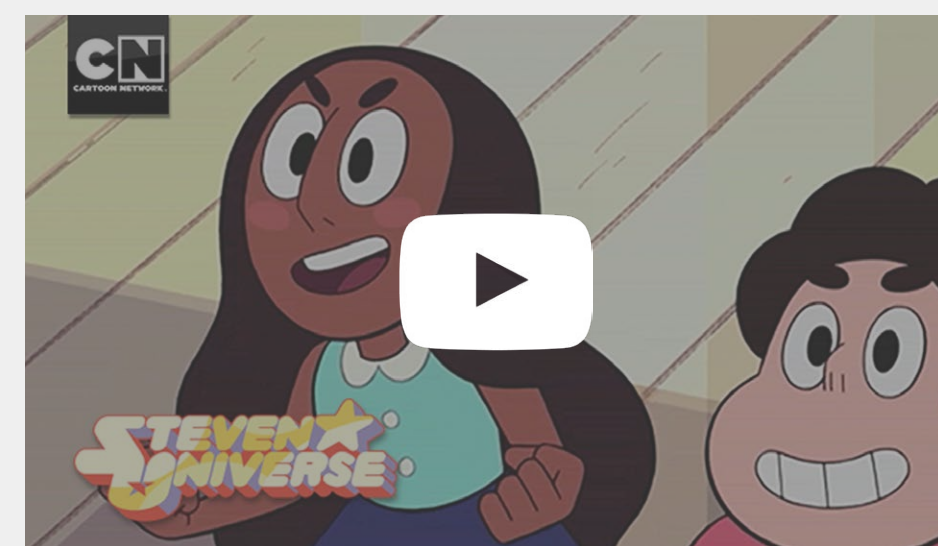
### Crash Course Kids

Sabrina is a smart, science-savvy female host.



### KIDZ BOP

KIDZ BOP has an even gender balance of stars who treat each other with mutual, musical respect.



### Cartoon Network/Steven Universe

Connie and Steven team up to fight the forces of evil – and show that each gender can pack a punch.





## Embrace Empathy

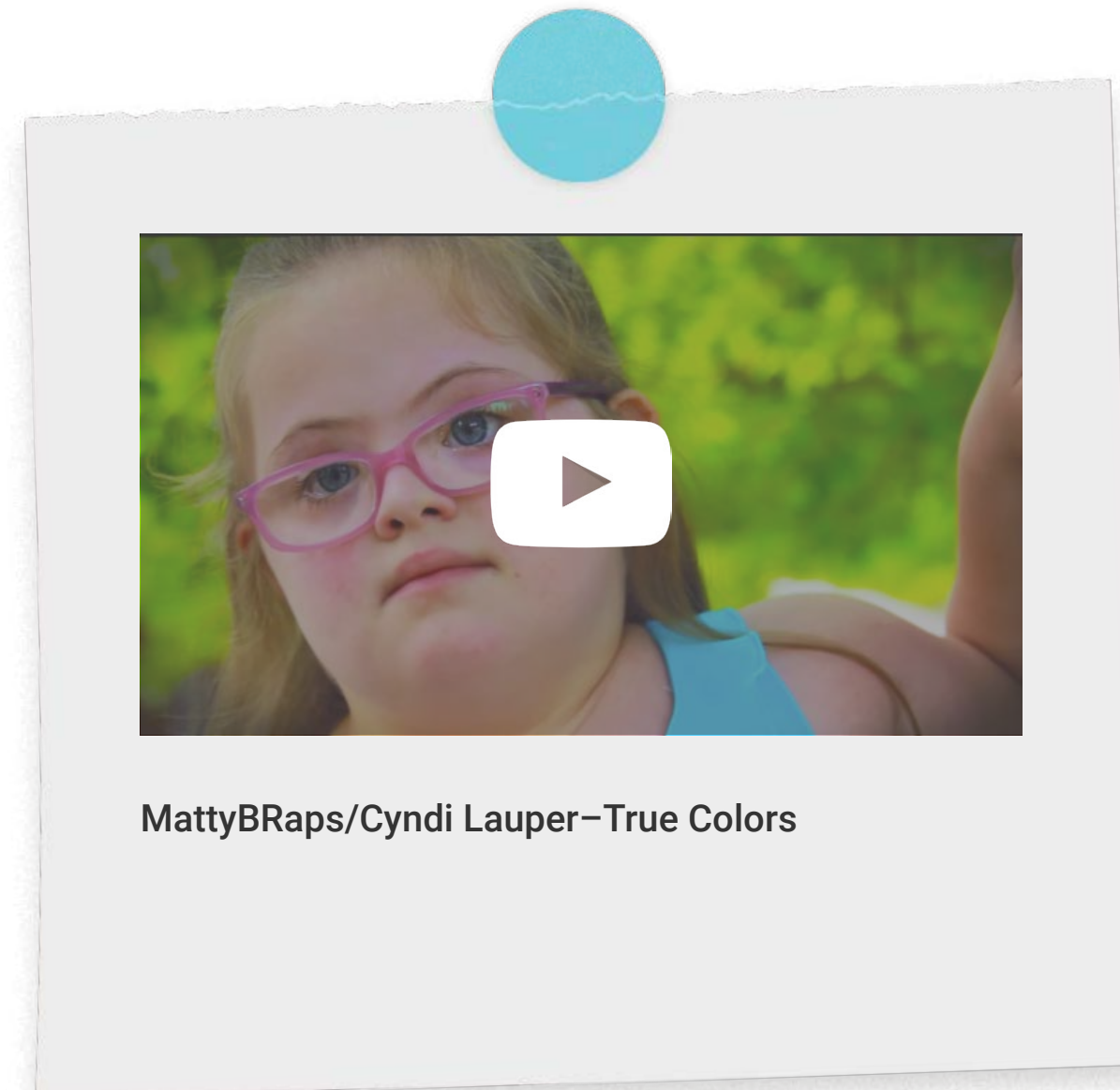
Let's face it, kids can have a lot of things to worry about these days.

*Will there be a toilet at school? Will my parents get a divorce? Is there an alien serpent living in my sock drawer? Does Mum love the new baby more than me? Will I always get picked last? Will I ever get my braces off?*

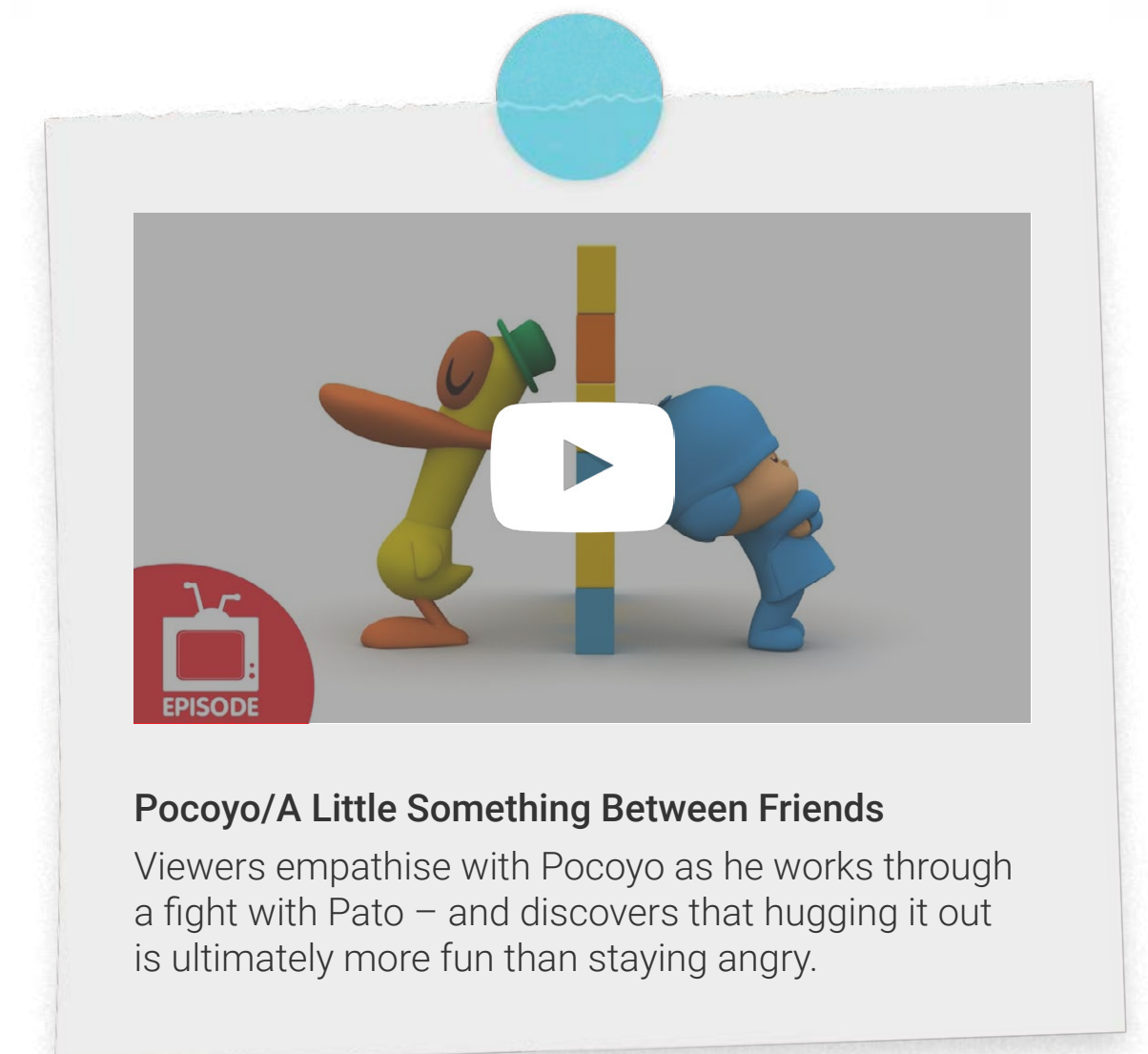
How can you help? One powerful tool is to model the expected behaviour through a character or object to help diffuse anxiety and work out constructive solutions. When kids feel connected to a character, they can share in the emotional journey and perhaps be inspired to clear that hurdle along with their character counterpart. In other words:

*Always Remember that Your Main Character is Your Viewer*

Of course we know a good story is not all sunshine and lollipops. Bad behaviours can be used to make the positive model more powerful and obvious. And, even the most jaded characters should have a sweet spot that makes them 'human'. Remember how Oscar the Grouch dotes on his pet worm, Slimey?

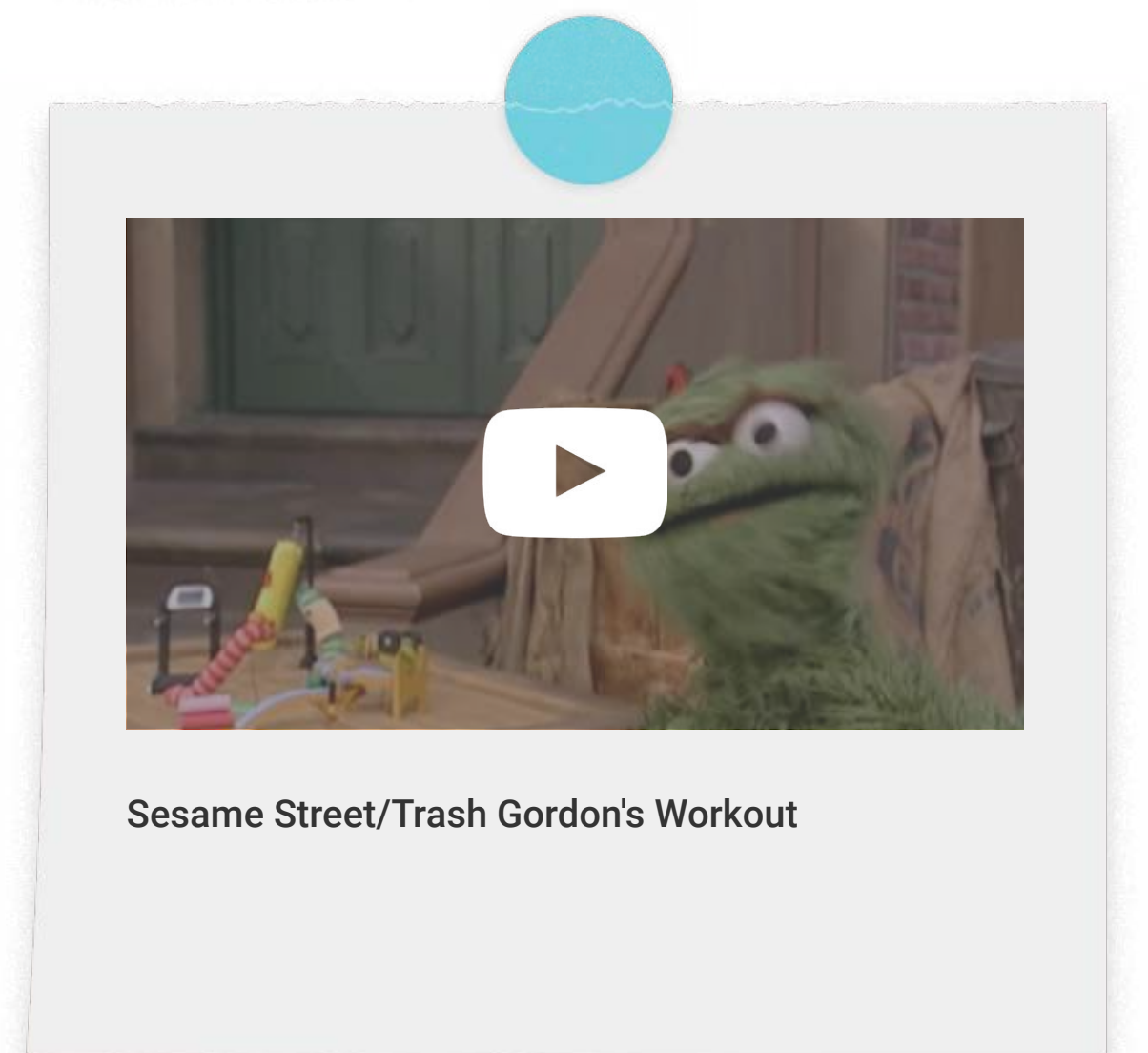


MattyBRaps/Cyndi Lauper-True Colors



Pocoyo/A Little Something Between Friends

Viewers empathise with Pocoyo as he works through a fight with Pato – and discovers that hugging it out is ultimately more fun than staying angry.



Sesame Street/Trash Gordon's Workout



## A Word About Kids in Videos

And while we're talking about empathy, a quick note about featuring real children in your videos: Kids often like to see real kids and families onscreen.

It can be incredibly empowering and inspiring. Just be sure that the kids that you feature are enthusiastic about the experience and 100% on board. *Always* secure parental consent for all participating children. And, of course, respect your young stars. *Never* make fun of, humiliate or belittle them, and never put them in harmful or inappropriate situations that may cause emotional or physical distress. Don't forget to put yourself in your viewers' shoes too – what may be considered ok for you and your family may not be ok for everyone. With the whole world watching on YouTube Kids, it's in your best interest to avoid uploading videos that could be seen as inappropriate in any way by a global audience.



**Note:** Now would be a good time to revisit our To Dos and To Don'ts with real kids in mind. Please always follow [YouTube's Community Guidelines](#) and ensure that you abide by all applicable child labour laws, rules and regulations when you feature minors in your content.



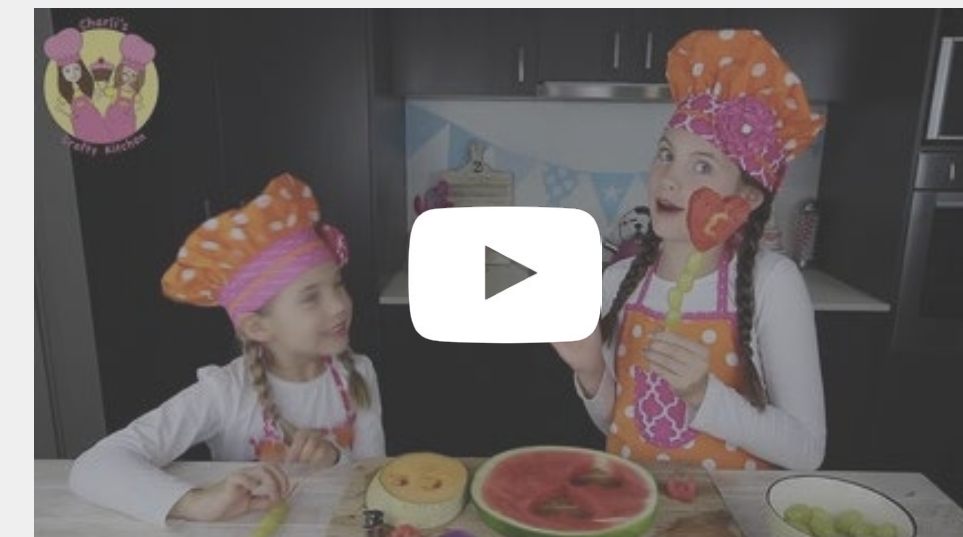
### Resources

[Making Caring Common Project](#)  
(Harvard U.)

[Social and Emotional Learning](#)  
(Edutopia)



Cute Girls Hairstyles/Dad Teaches How to Create Pippi Longstocking Braids



CharlisCraftyKitchen/Birthday Fruit Pops & Veggie Men





# Story

## Tell a Great Story

The story of your show might be a *Once Upon a Time*-type deal or a *My Trip to the Fire Station*. No matter what story you are telling, take a page from the BEST bedtime books:



**Beginning:** Captivate your audience straight away

**Middle:** Present a problem or obstacle to be overcome

**End:** Find resolution and facilitate sweet dreams

## FIELD NOTES

TITLE

Tips for Telling an Engaging Story

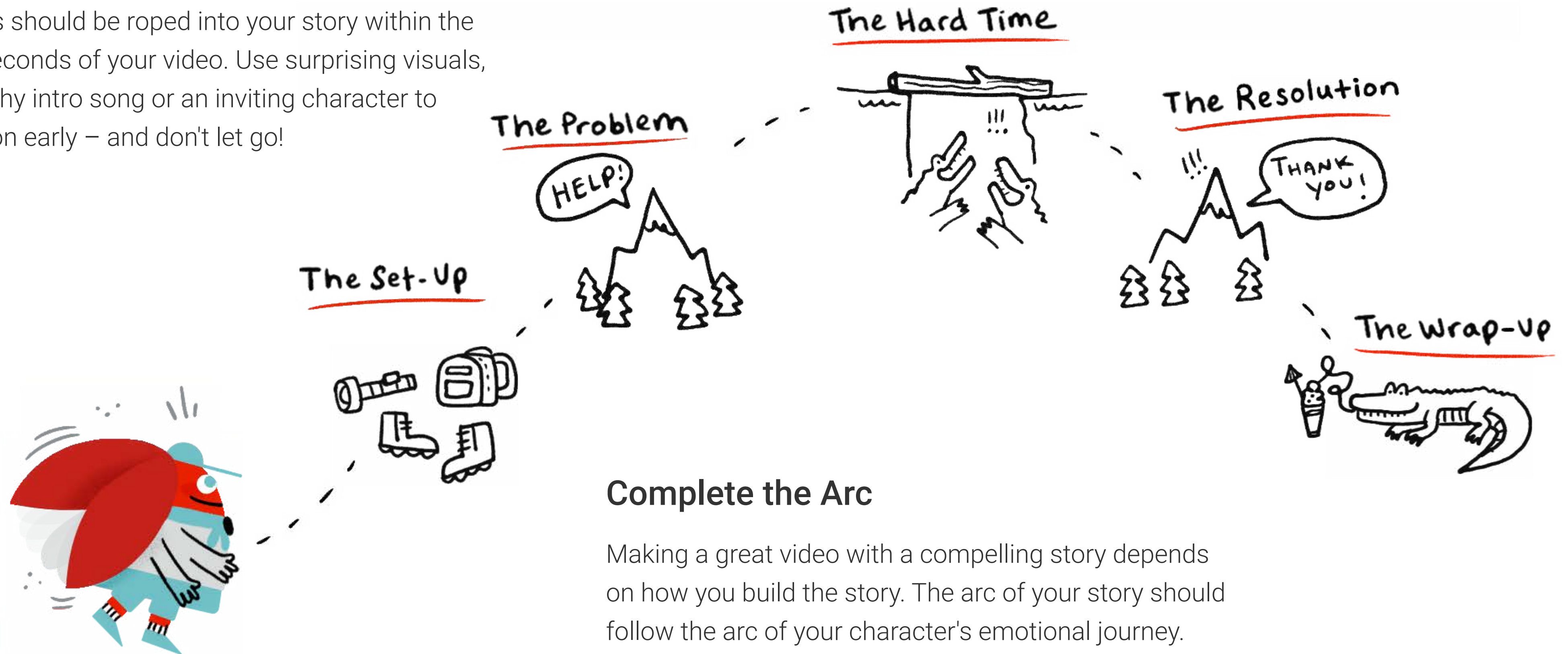
*Grab Attention*

*Complete the Arc*

*Make it your Own*

## Grab Attention

Your viewers should be roped into your story within the first 5–15 seconds of your video. Use surprising visuals, a short, catchy intro song or an inviting character to grab attention early – and don't let go!



## Complete the Arc

Making a great video with a compelling story depends on how you build the story. The arc of your story should follow the arc of your character's emotional journey.



## Make It Your Own

Add your own twist and funky fresh style. Just like thumbprints and snowflakes, no two stories are alike.

Take a classic nursery rhyme like Jack and Jill, for instance. Maybe in your version, Jill decides she is sick and tired of schlepping water and starts an epic water fight atop the hill, resulting in the world's first water slide. Or, maybe you insert silly sound effects and encourage viewers to shout out the missing words. Or you try saying everything superspeed. Or reeeeeeeallly sloooowly. Or underwater. Or in Nepalese.

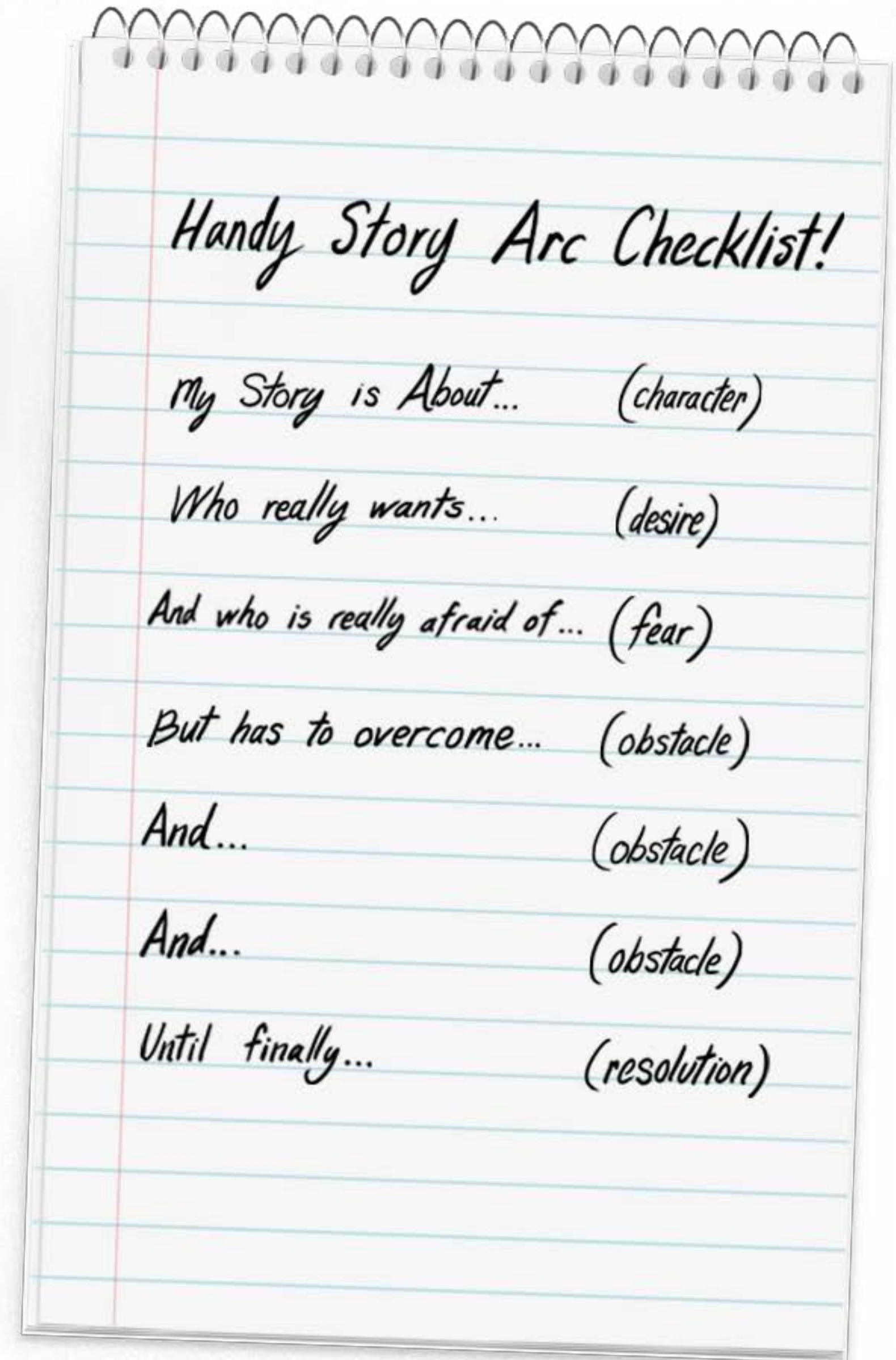
The possibilities are endless. Don't settle for the same old, same old. Make the story your own.

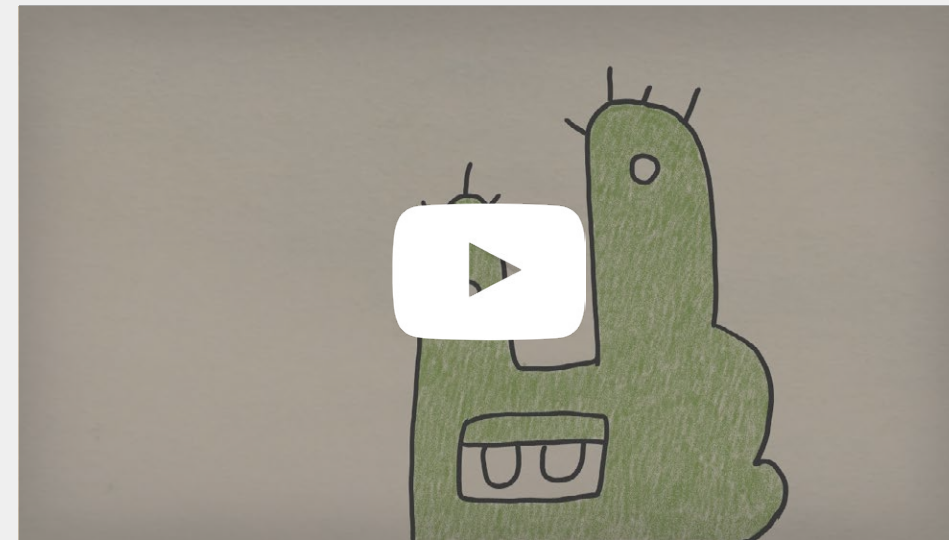


### Resource

[The Story Map \(PBS Kids\)](#)

\* *See Worksheet C*





**notebook babies/Someone Who Gets You**

This tight story arc follows the main character on a simple but poignant journey to find someone who gets his jokes.



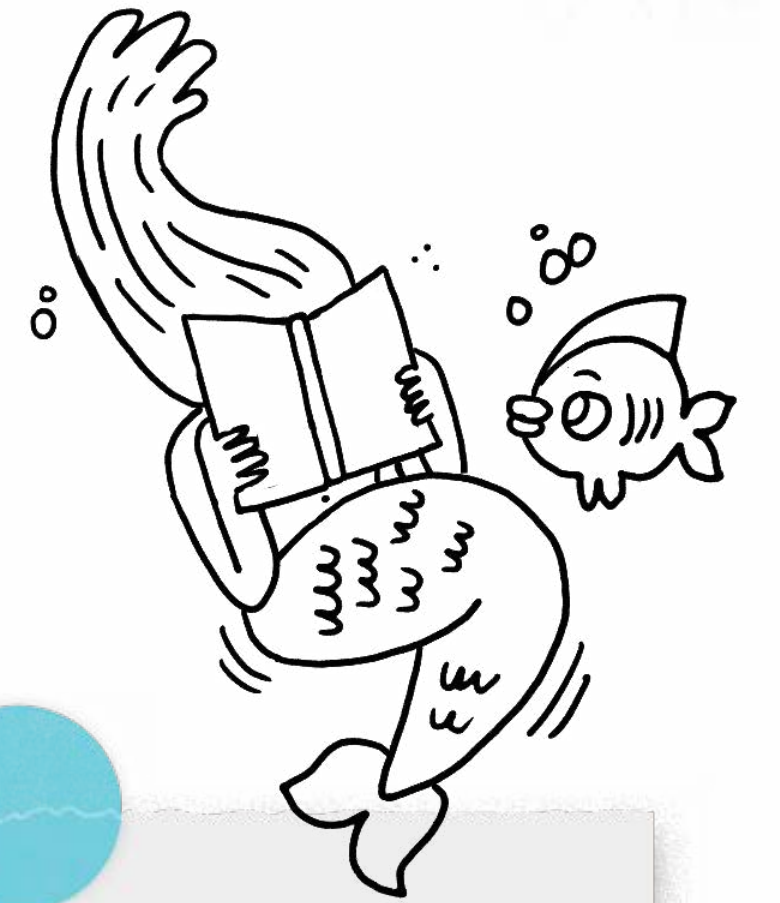
**Air Bud TV/Puppy Preschool**

Miss Lena brings the mystery genre to the preschool set with a delightful story and audience participation.



**HISHE Kids/Fixed Fairy Tales**

The Fixed Fairy Tale series starts with classic stories but makes each tale its own by adding clever, modern twists.





# Interaction

## Go Beyond the Screen

Find ways to extend the experience of your show beyond the screen.

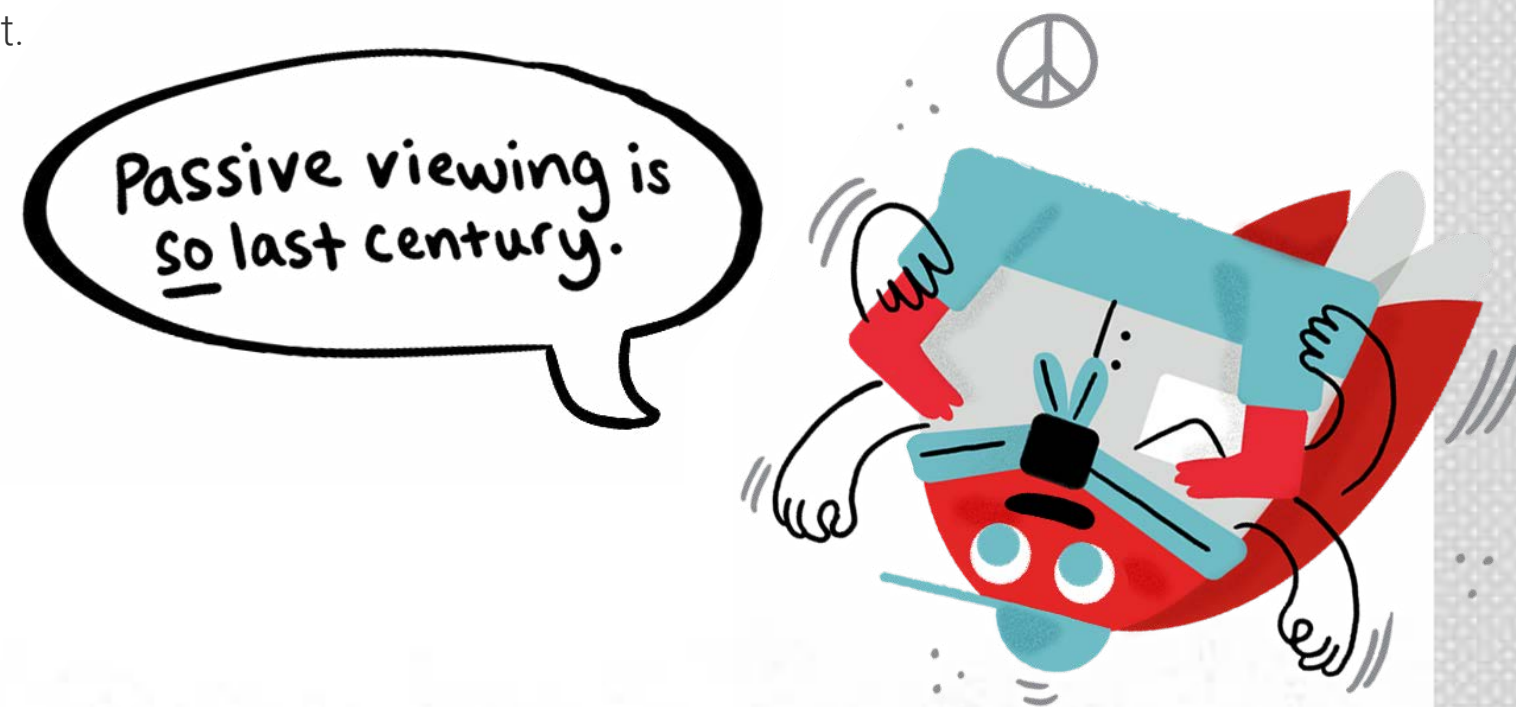
Encourage kids to get their blood pumping, oxygen to their brains and ideas spilling over into their own lives. As a famous neurophysiologist\* once said, 'Movement anchors thought'. So, hike up your sports socks and:

Jump up! Prance like a pony! Kiss your elbows!\*\* Grab your roller skates and unleash your knowledge on the world!

\* Famous neurophysiologist = Dr Carla Hannaford

\*\* If you can kiss your elbows, we will send you a unicorn in the mail.\*\*\*

\*\*\* This is a joke. Unicorns do not like cramped spaces, and we would never subject them to parcel post.



### FIELD NOTES TITLE

Tips to Inspire Interaction

*Get Moving*

*Talk Back*

*Make Stuff*

*Find Stuff*

*Test Stuff*

*Save the World*



## Get Moving

*Get off your backsides and give me 20!* Find ways to get children dancing, singing and otherwise moving around – it's good for bodies, brains AND engagement.

## Talk Back

From helping Dora (again) to clapping for Tinkerbell, younger viewers in the family respond to responding.

Try sing-alongs, call-and-response chants, shouting out answers, cheering on characters ... wait, what do you think is the best way to get your audience to respond? (pause) Whoa. That is MAD BRILLIANT!

## Tips for talking back

Ask questions with only ONE answer: 'How many slugs came to the picnic? ... 7!'

Ask questions with ANY answer: 'Where would YOU go in your rocket ship? ... No way! Amazing!'



The Pop Ups/Pretend We Forgot



Cosmic Kids Zen Den/Hidden Treasure!



## Make Stuff

What better way to bring the safari home than to create your own toilet roll binoculars? Or simultaneously amuse and amaze your family with a science experiment? Making stuff is fun. Just follow these three simple rules:

1. Use a short list of common household materials.
2. Make sure that the number and complexity of steps are age-appropriate.
3. Make something that actually works. Well.

## Find Stuff

Get some fresh air! Inspire your audience to look for things that extend the experience of your show – find leaves, earthworms, bottle caps, metamorphic rocks and other fascinating discoveries. And, if it's a living thing, remind viewers to treat it gently. Especially if it's a puma.

## Test Stuff

Which falls faster, a teddy bear or a book? Is pond scum an acid or a base? How many times can you fold a piece of paper in half? Inspire kids to take the learning into their own messy hands. Just remember to adjust directions for a young audience – or your experiments will fizzle like a DIY volcano without the baking soda.



Full-Time Kid/DIY Piñata



Peep and the Big Wide World/Collecting and Sorting

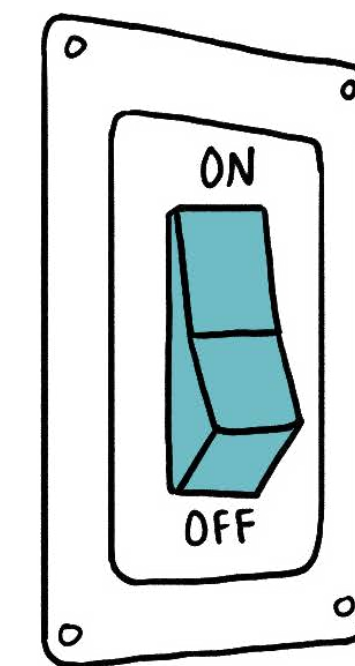
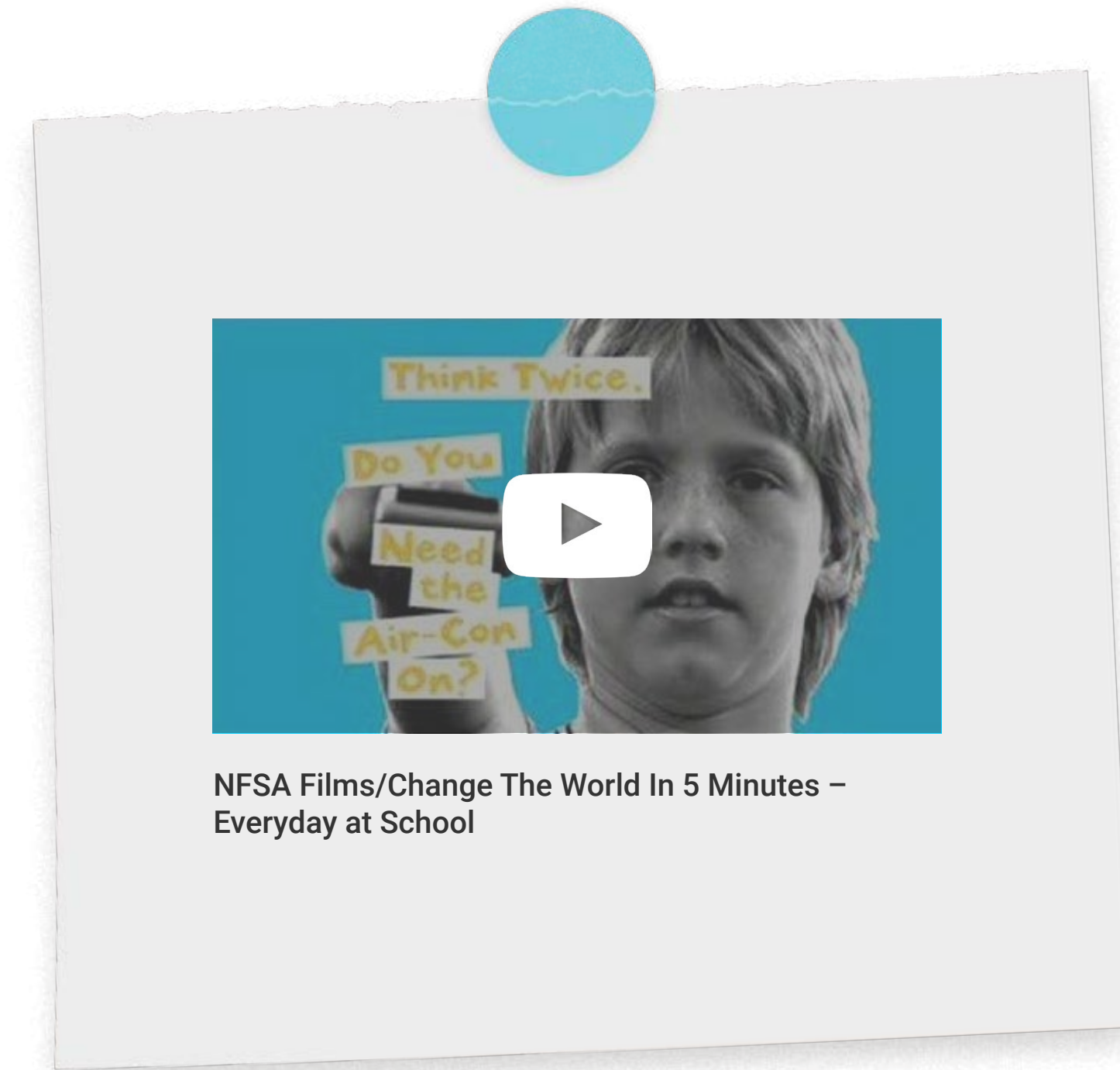


WhizKidScience/EGG IN A BOTTLE Easy Kids Science Experiments



## Save the World

Let's face it, kids are our great hope for the future, and they really do help create sustainable change – starting with their own families. Because of well-designed, entertaining media, children introduced their parents to recycling and nagged them to stop smoking. What will your content inspire?







# Authenticity

## Be Real

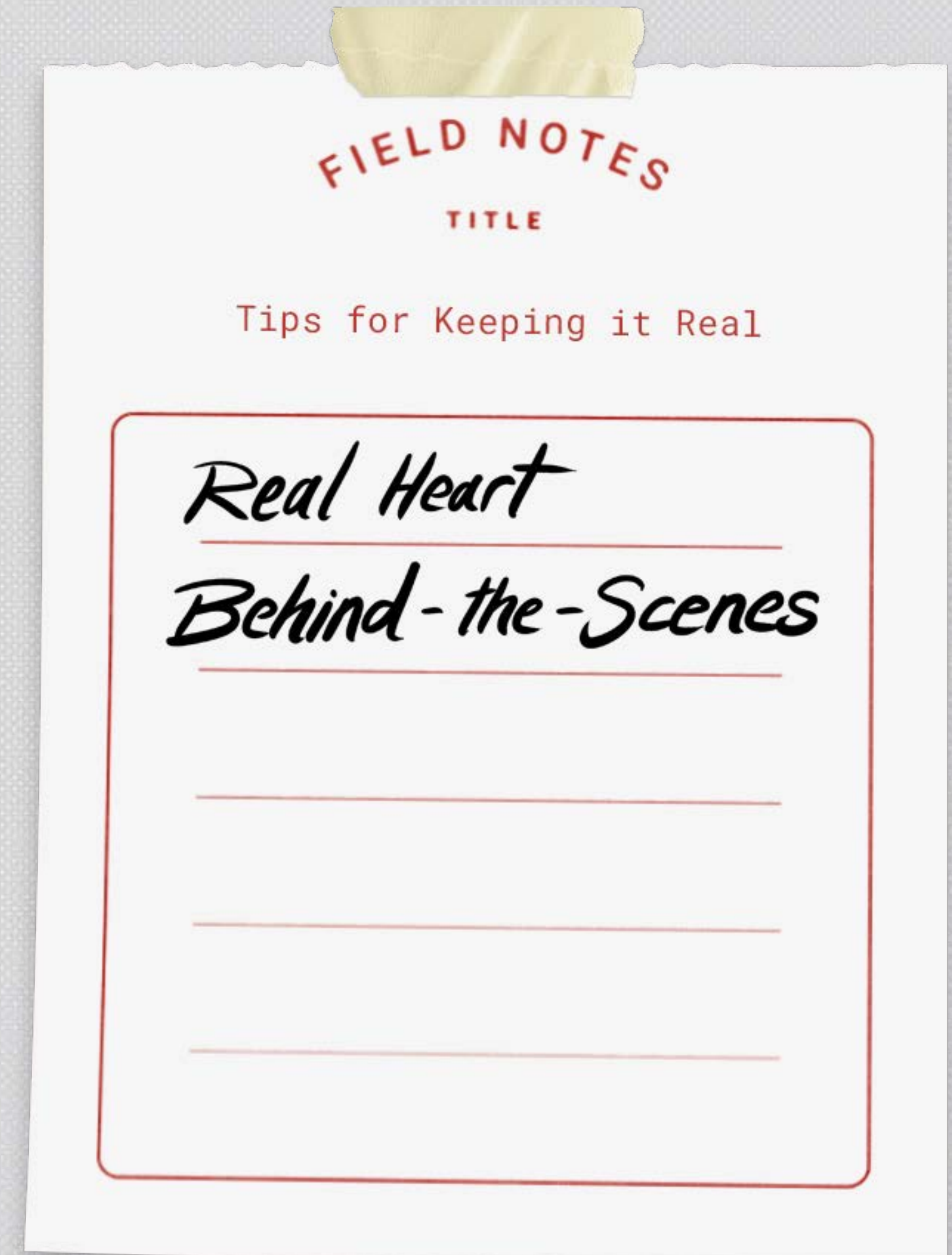
Bring your genuine self to the table and dish it out. YouTube Kids viewers expect it.

Your unique voice can also differentiate your show and help it stand out from the crowd. You may choose to speak directly to your audience – or not. Your show may be grounded in the real world – or not. That said, remember to put yourself in your viewers' shoes too – what may be considered authentic to you may not be appropriate for everyone. And while it's tempting to tap into trends or shock viewers to elicit reactions and drive viewership, avoid sensationalist tactics like these if they are not family-friendly and authentic to your unique voice. The key to being authentic is...

*Tell the story that only YOU can tell.*

So whether your show features a tour of your workshop or a quirky sea cucumber looking for adventure, share your genuine passion and voice with your audience. They deserve it. Make them feel like part of the real – and really awesome – experience that you create.

**Note:** Please always remember our To Dos and To Don'ts and follow [YouTube's Community Guidelines](#) and ensure that you abide by all applicable child labour laws, rules and regulations when you feature minors in your content.





## Real Heart

Create videos that YOU care about. Let your passion and commitment blast through the screen and electrify your viewers.\*

\* Note: That would be the figurative, harmless kind of electricity. Not the high-voltage kind.



RockBandLandOfficial/Rainbow Beast (w/ Psycho Penguins)





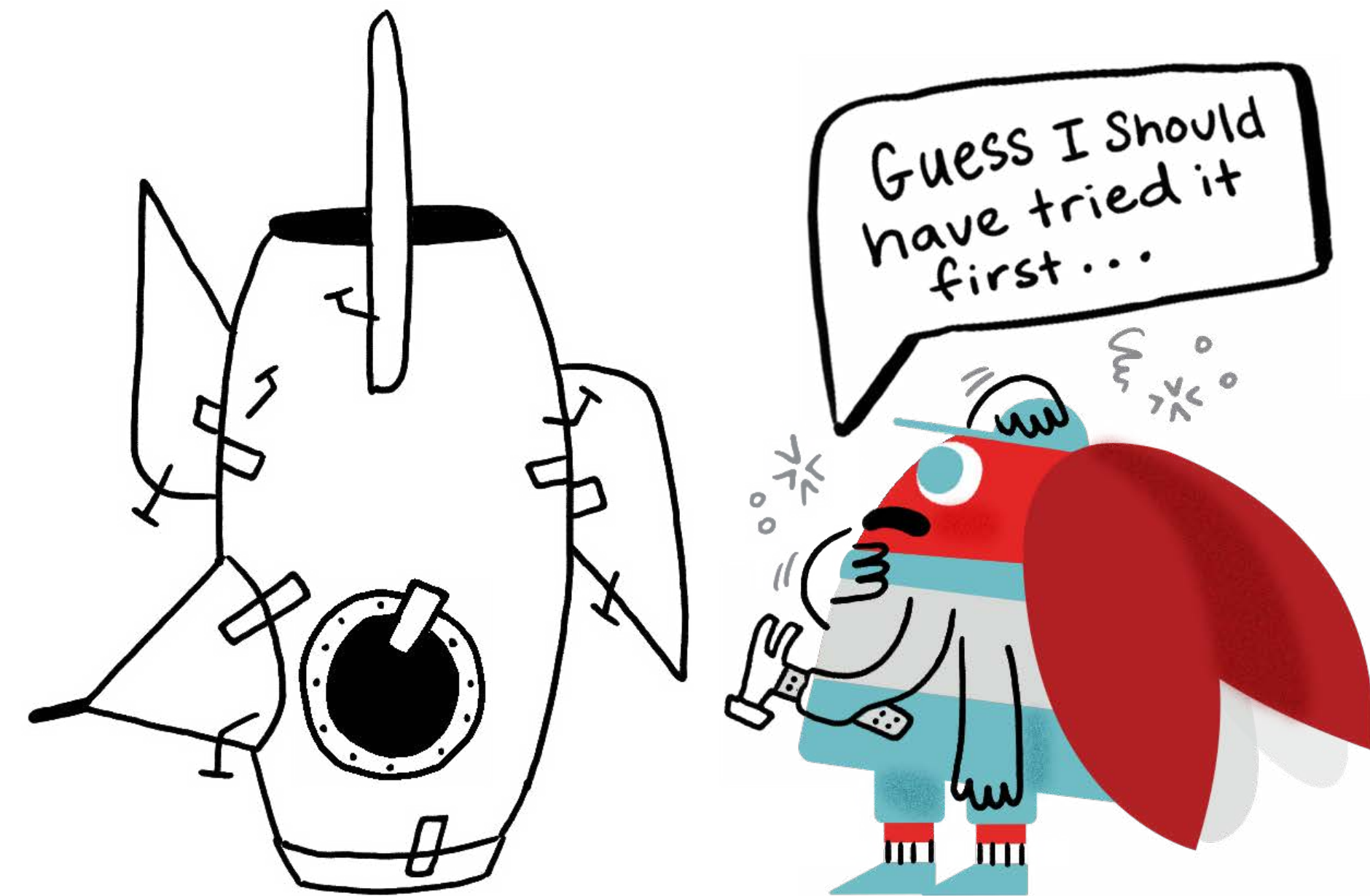
## Behind-the-Scenes

Consider including behind-the-scenes videos, extras and blooper segments to let your viewers in on the thrill of creation.



Resource

[Conversation \(Creator Academy\)](#)





# Family

## Watch and Vlog Together

Is your show wholesome and fun and interesting and accessible? Do parents *and* pipsqueaks look forward to the next episode?

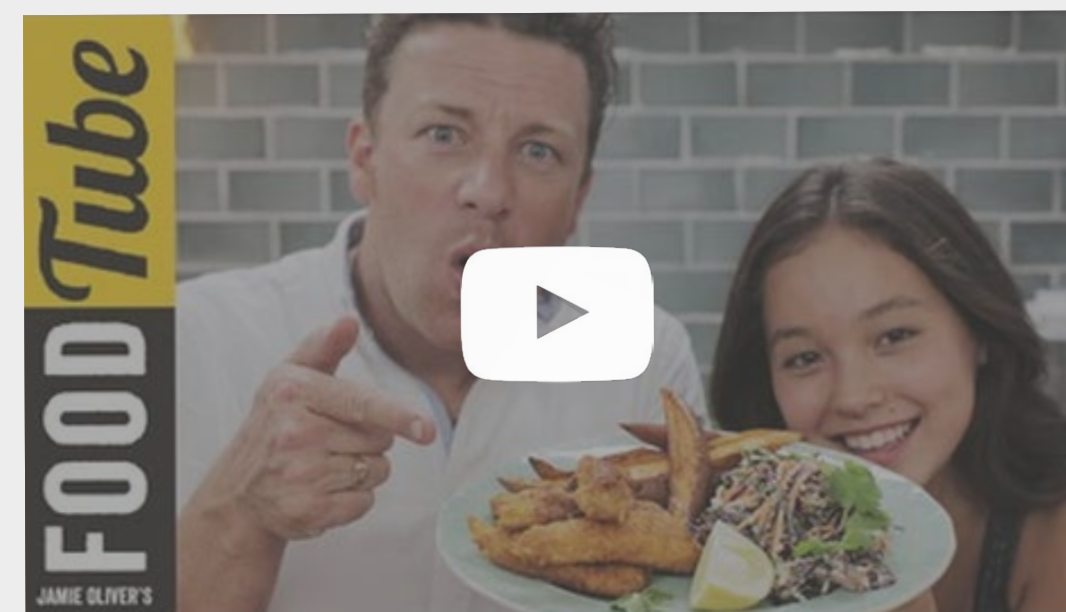
Well, then you have created something remarkable – a show that can be eligible to be shown on YouTube Kids and that the whole family can enjoy. Treat your awesome show with kid gloves. Avoid introducing anything that may be inappropriate.

Ask yourself:

*Is my family-friendly show truly family friendly?*



BlueWorldTV/JONATHAN BIRD'S BLUE WORLD



Jamie Oliver's Food Tube/Homemade Chicken Nuggets



## A Word About Parent Vlogs

One genre that has grown up in the YouTube community is the Parent Vlog.

When you get your whole family in on the act, there are some special considerations to keep in mind to make sure that your content puts children and families first. Popular vlogs have built their own active communities – many recognise the opportunity (and responsibility!) to be positive role models for their viewers, and some are even using their widespread influence for social good. The following creators are great examples of families that invite viewers into their lives and produce engaging, wholesome content that celebrates family life.

**Note:** Now would be a good time to revisit our To Dos and To Don'ts. Please always follow [YouTube's Community Guidelines](#) and ensure that you abide by all applicable child labour laws, rules and regulations when you feature minors in your content.



La Guardia Cross/Interview With A Toddler



## Engage Your Audience > Family

Judy Travis first started posting beauty tutorials as a college student. As her family grew, she launched a second channel, *It's Judy's Life*, to record family life 'on the daily'. Here are a few things this family is doing right:

### Keep it Positive

The Traveses share 'the good, the bad, the crazy' with grace and humour.

### Set Boundaries

Judy and husband Benji agree on what to keep private, and they each have veto power over final cuts.

### Be Real

Judy keeps her vlog relatable by not pretending to be perfect.

### Make a Difference

The Traveses use their star power and massive following for social good.



It's Judy's Life

"It's priceless to be able to be around your family all day and call it work. In addition, we love the fact that we are documenting our kids' lives as they grow, for us to look back on for years to come."

- Benji Travis



## Engage Your Audience > Family

There are plenty of beauty and family-friendly videos out there, but one thing that distinguishes [Cute Girls Hairstyles](#) is that viewers care about this family. Really care.

Creator Mindy McKnight pairs great hair demos with a cast of friendly family members. She launched her YouTube channel with a short demonstration on how to make a messy bun back in 2009. By 2016, the family had four spin-off channels. Here are some things the McKnights are doing right:

### Keep it Simple

The videos are clear and simple and never feel over-produced.

### Keep it Fun for Everyone

Kids and parents enjoy participating in the videos together. Twins Brooklyn and Bailey enjoyed it so much that they asked to launch their own channel.

### Make it Matter

This is about more than just great hair – Mindy's videos speak to the special connection between mothers and daughters.

### Get Global

Clear, step-by-step visuals encourage viewers from all over the world to tune in. The McKnights also use search engine optimisation to [translate video metadata](#) for a global audience.



Cute Girls Hairstyles

*"Balancing family life with a full-time YouTube career is not easy, and it takes effective communication, planning, and yes, sacrifice to allow both to succeed. Family is our foundation, and YouTube is a way for us to help provide for it. We aren't perfect at that balance, but we have a lot of fun as a family, create lasting memories together, and are able to teach our children how to work hard and to love and inspire others."*

*- Mindy & Shaun McKnight*





Make a plan



Dig deep



Be understood



# Enrich Your Audience



Make it stick



Don't over-promise







Your show may or may not be educational in the traditional sense, but no matter what, your young viewers are going to learn *something* from your show.

They can't help it! They are perfectly evolved to absorb everything that you give them and mash it all together to help make sense of their world. There are many ways, large and small, to make your already awesome show more enriching. So, ask yourself early and often:

*What do I want  
Viewers to take Away  
from my Show?*





# Goals

## Make a Plan

Whether you are teaching underwater basket-weaving or how to find the negative reciprocal of pi squared,\* you had best study up. Be clear about your goals and develop a watertight plan, because even young viewers *will* find all the holes.

\* The negative reciprocal of pi squared is negative  $1/10^{\text{th}}$ .  
BTW, this is *always* a good answer to *any* question.

## FIELD NOTES

TITLE

Tips for Defining Goals  
for Your Show

*Start with WHY*

*End with HOW*

*Dive into Details*

*Revise with New Eyes*



## Start with WHY

This may sound obvious, but WHY are you making this show for YouTube Kids? Does it fill a gap? Does it give children and families something that they need? What is your BIG GOAL? No, really, WHY?

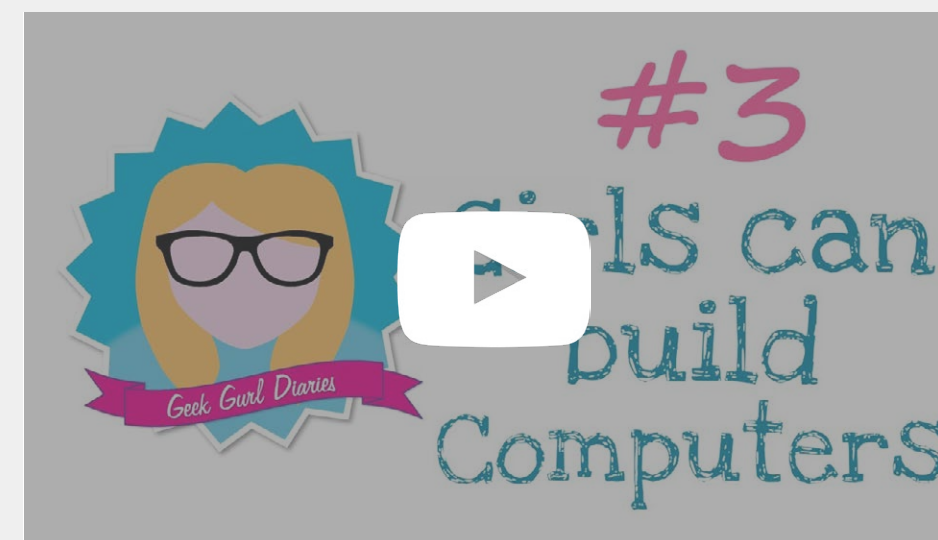
*My Big Goal:*



**Mother Goose Club**  
Bring Preschool to the World



**Kid President**  
Kids Can Change the World



**Geek Gurl Diaries**  
Girls Can Be Geeks Too!

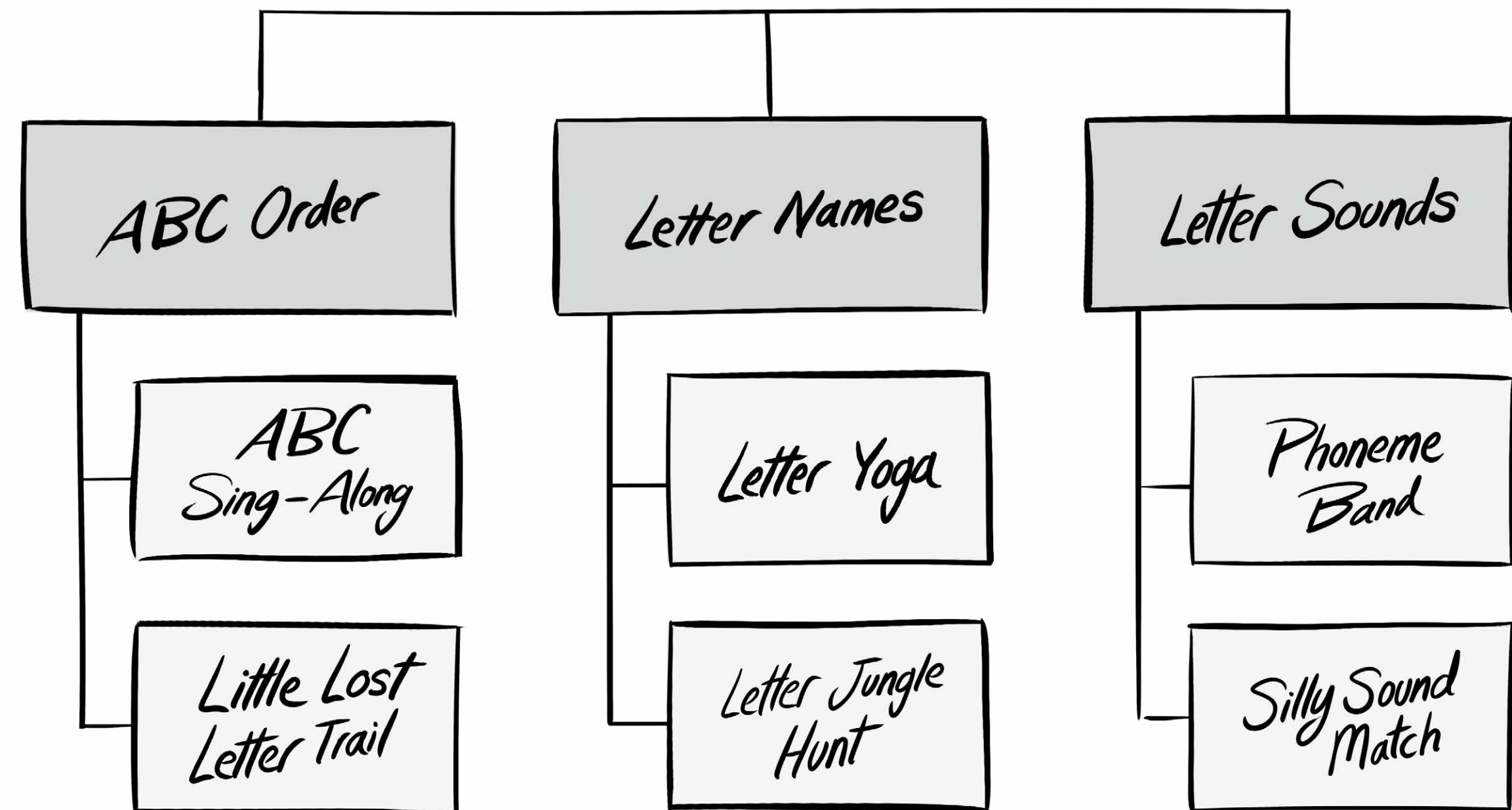


## End with HOW

Great! Now map out a course to reach your Big Goal. Depending on your goal, this map might be very detailed or pretty basic. The key is to make a thoughtful plan to take your viewers on an enriching journey. Here's an example to get you started.



## Help Pre-schoolers Learn Their ABCs





## Dive into Details

You can then research and tinker and add detail to each of these HOWs to build a really solid and helpful map that guides the development of your show.

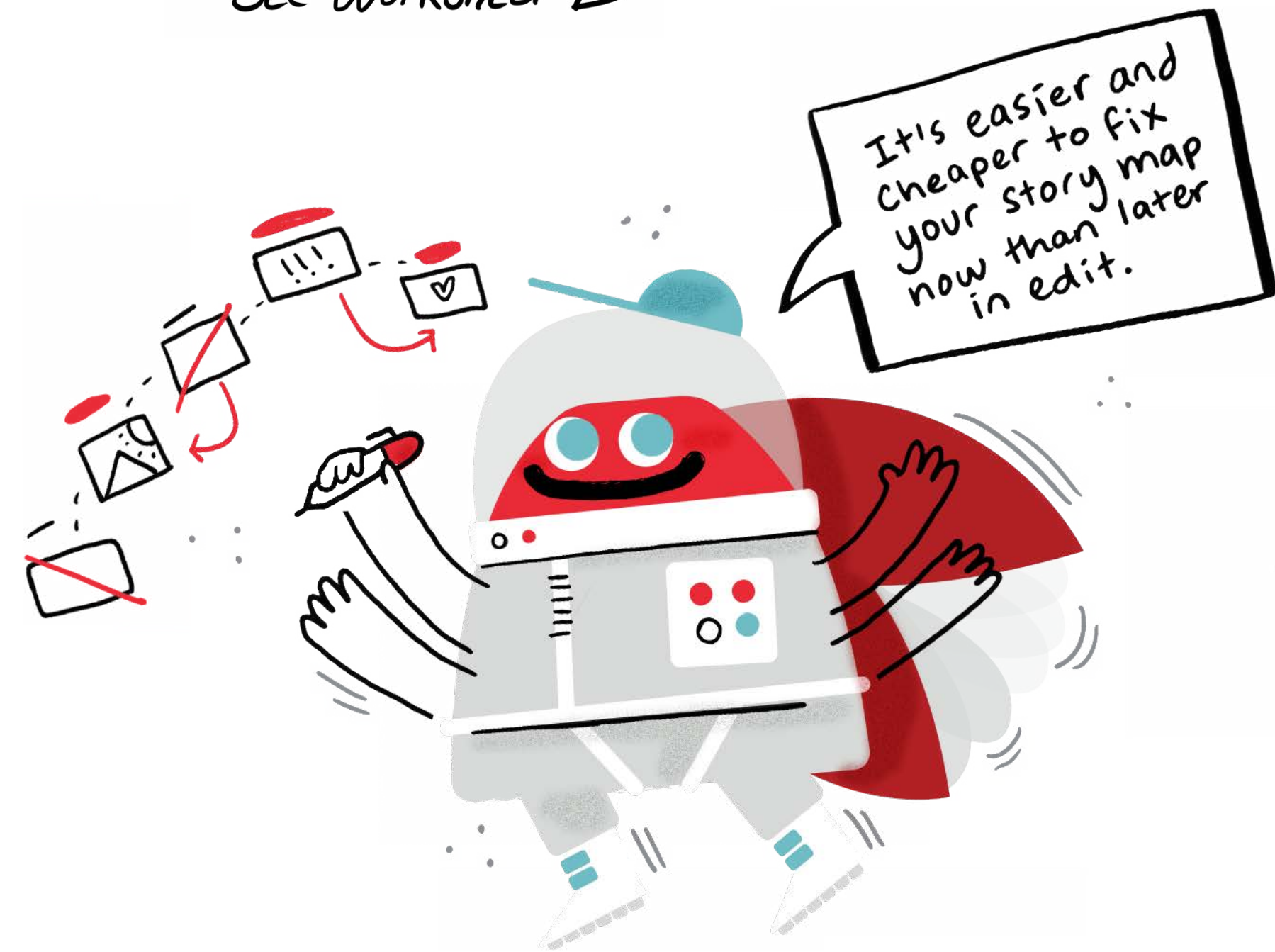
But wait! What if your show is not *educational*? What if you are not trying to *teach* anything?

As discussed earlier, every show teaches something. Everything you put out there is communicating a message to your viewers. So whether your goal is to teach kids how to tie their shoelaces or inspire them to sing out loud, support it with a well-thought-out plan. And, who knows? You may find more opportunities to enrich your audience than you first imagined.

## Revise with New Eyes

Made a plan? Check! Now share your plan and revise as needed. A solid plan can guide development for many seasons of excellent, enriching content.

\* *See Worksheet D*





# Research

## Dig Deep

A captivating topic – one that YOU'RE interested in – is the best way to start any research project.

Make sure that you cover the basics, and then blow it out of the water! This isn't school! Your audience has to WANT to stick around because your show is profoundly fascinating. As the great Theodor Geisel\* once said, 'Because most people stop with the Z, but not me!」\*\*

Cool School's Mister Histor digs deep on the history of the sneaker – in 3 minutes.

\* Theodor Geisel – Also known as Dr. Seuss. BTW, a nom de plume can be great fun. Just ask Lemony Snicket. Or Lady Gaga.

\*\* From the Dr. Seuss classic *On Beyond Zebra!* (1955).



Cool School/The History of Sneakers

FIELD NOTES  
TITLE

Tips to Dig Deep

*Cover the Basics*

*Become an Expert*

*Make it Matter*

*Go Beyond*

*Bragging Rights*

## Cover the Basics

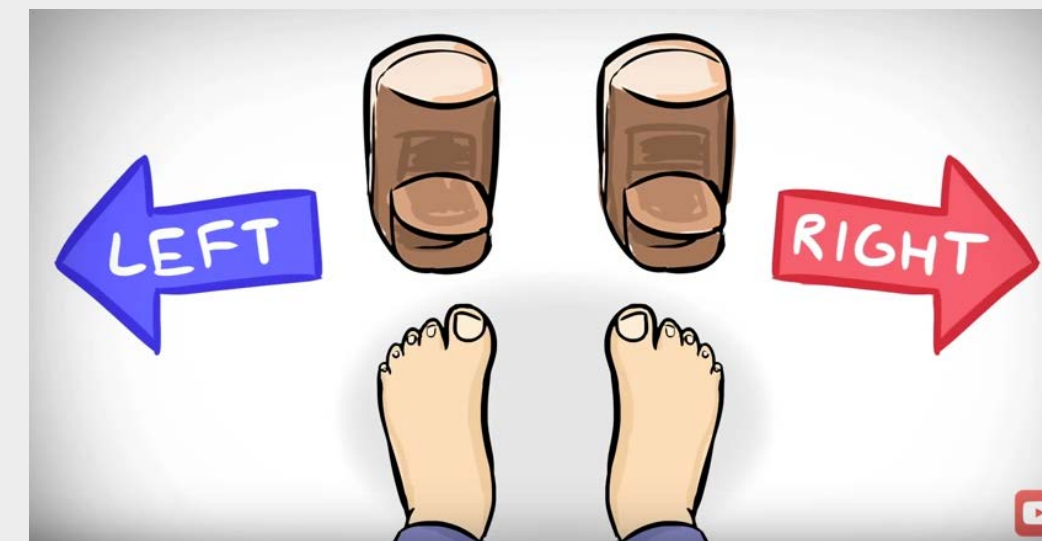
Make sure that your viewers have a baseline understanding of your topic. Why do people need shoes, anyway?



Example 1

## Become an Expert

Dig deep to discover the most interesting gems for your viewers. For example, did you know that the first shoes did not have a left or right foot? How about that the first sneakers were called plimsolls? Or that they got their current name because they are so quiet you can *sneak* up on people without being heard? Mister Histor does.



Example 2

## Make It Matter

Try drawing comparisons to things that kids can relate to in their own lives. Recognising that young viewers may not know what a 'canvas' is, Mister Histor points out that it's the same material that artists often use when they paint.

## Go Beyond

Take it further than expected. The first sneakers were invented by a guy named Norman who had enormous feet. In fact, he was known as Enormous Norman. Mister Histor takes us well beyond soles and laces.



Example 3



Example 4





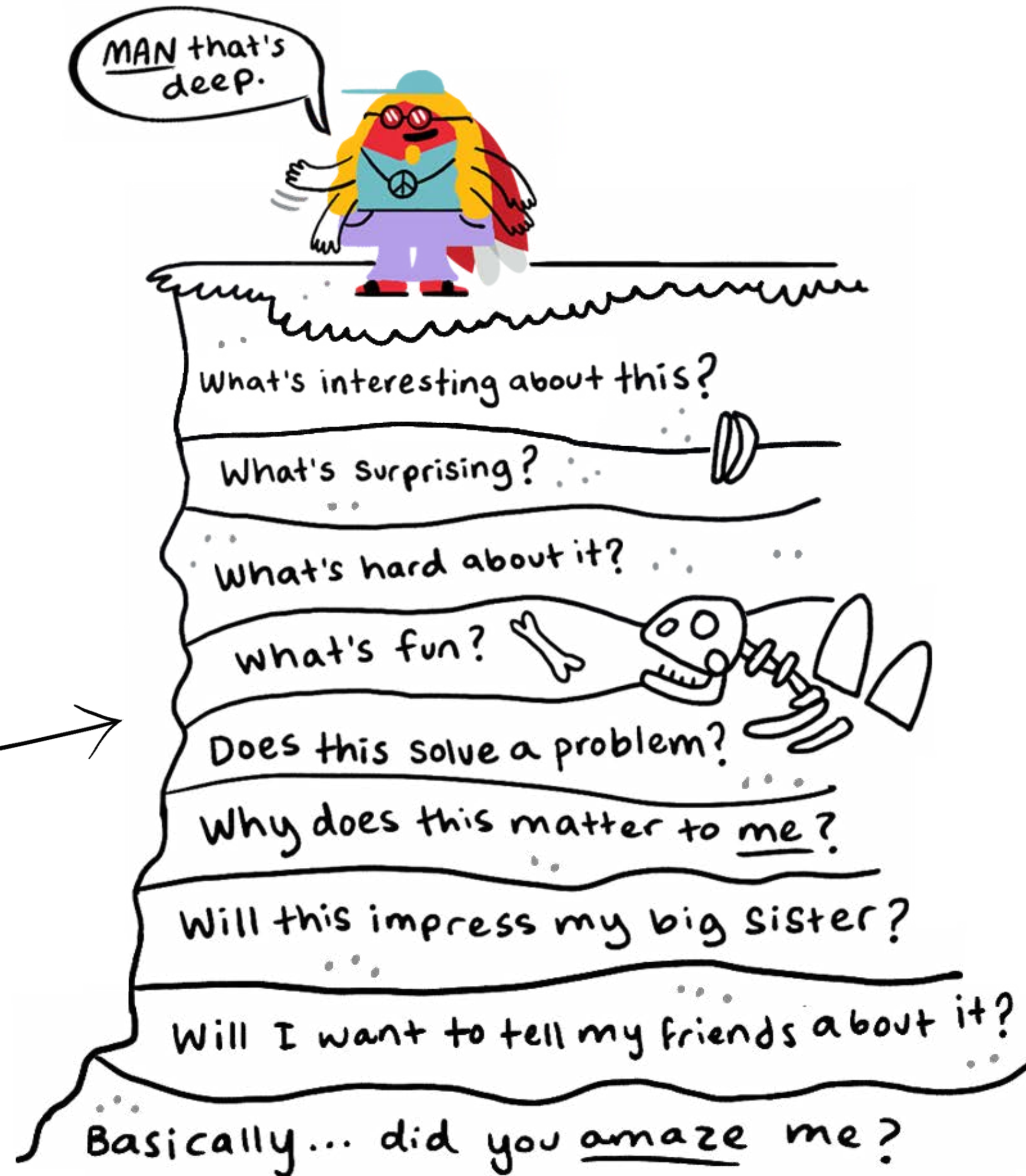
## Bragging Rights

Give your viewer information that can be used to impress, amaze and, dare we say, show off.

## Deep Questions

Imagine your viewers asking you the following:

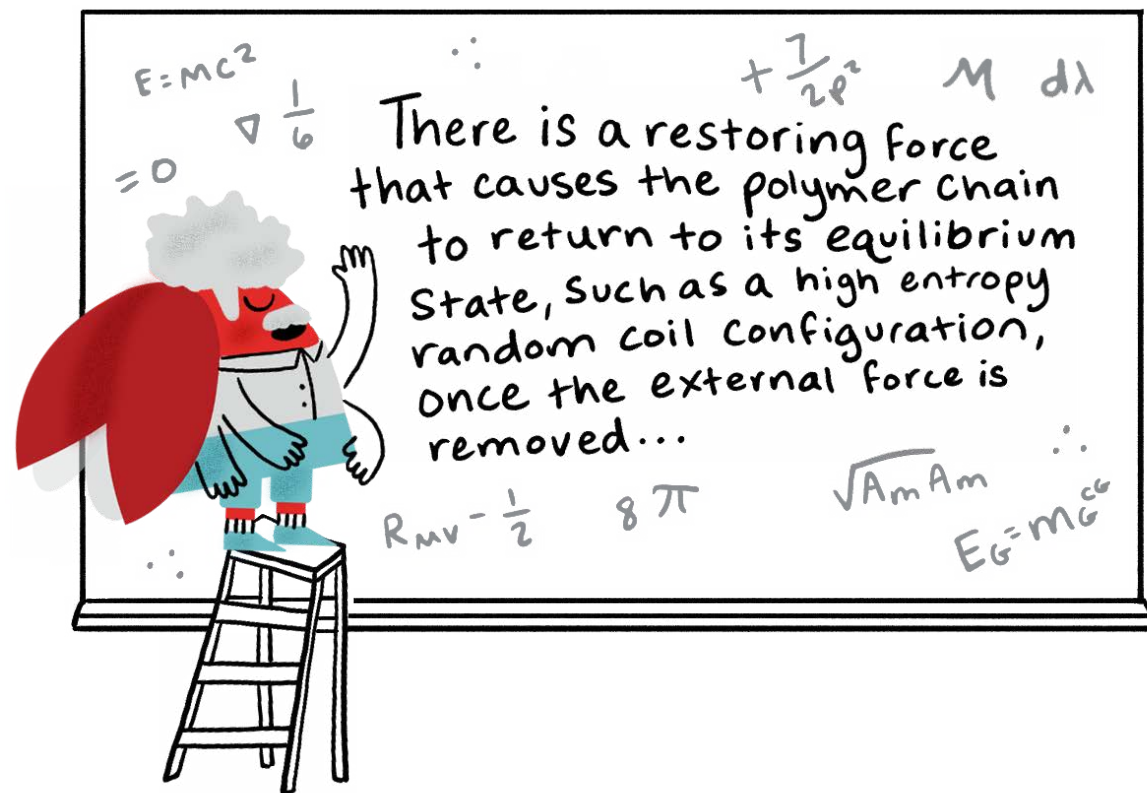
\* See Worksheet E





# Vocabulary

Be Understood



Got it?

Unless you have a Ph.D, MD, Ed.D or Ab.C in Physical Chemistry with a focus in laser spectroscopy, probably not.

Well, that's how kids feel every time you throw vocabulary at them that is not at their level. Be selective about the words that you use so that kids can absorb whatever it is that you're trying to tell them. If you fail, your content will shoot right past them like a high entropy random coil configuration. Whoosh!

\* Translation: 'A rubber band snaps'

FIELD NOTES

TITLE

Tips for Choosing Your Words Carefully

Words to Comprehend

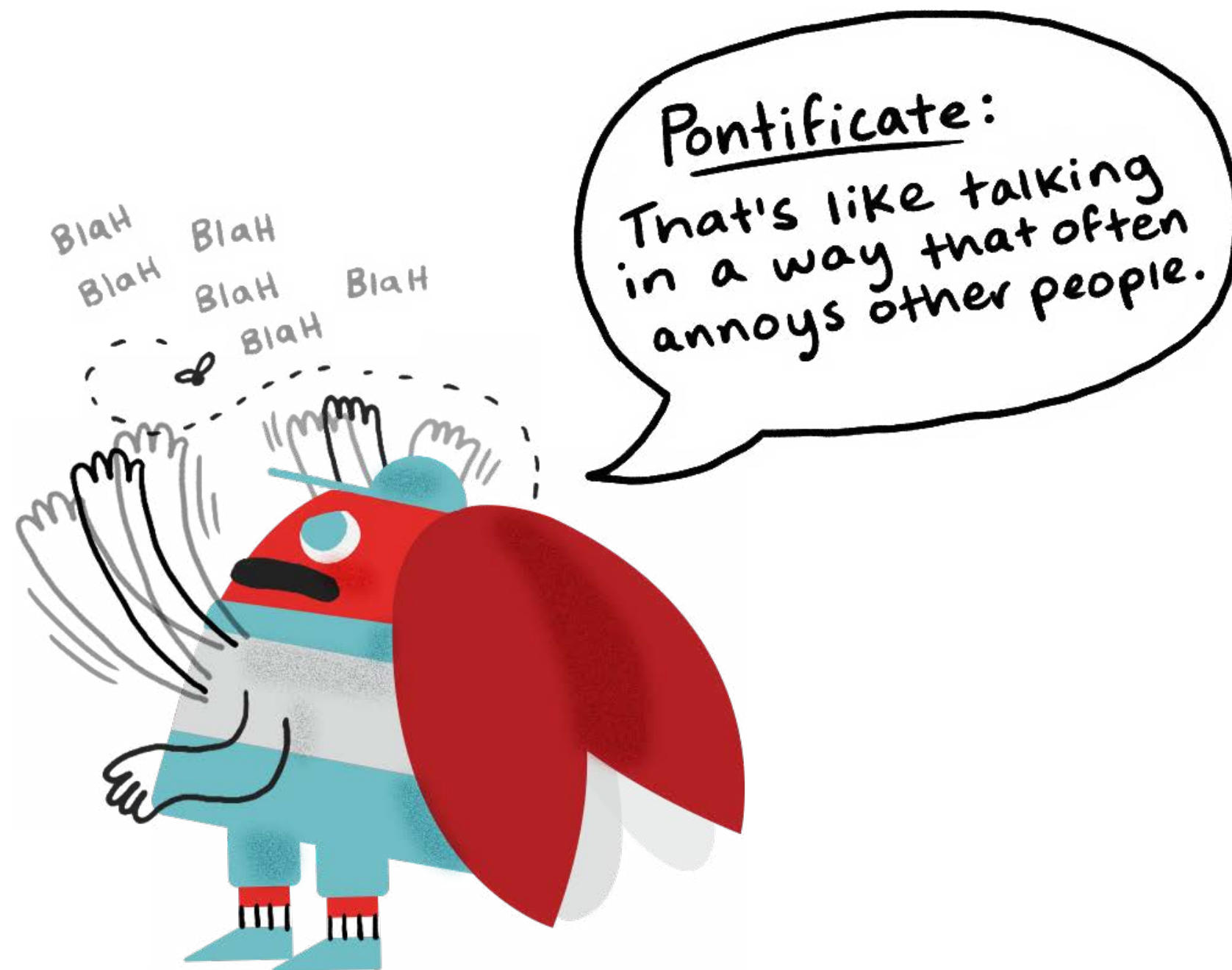
Words to Read

Words Around the World

Big Words

## Words to Comprehend

When introducing words that children may not know, it can be helpful – and less stodgy – to think of 'describing' rather than 'defining':



## Words to Read

Bear in mind that young viewers can comprehend many more words than they are able to read. If you are thinking of featuring onscreen text, take a look at the Resource links at the end of this section to help budding readers follow along.

## Words Around the World

If viewers speak a different language at home, bear in mind that idioms, slang and colloquialisms can be lost in translation.

This doesn't mean that you have to make it B-O-R-I-N-G, but it does mean that you should use your language thoughtfully and help your viewers understand expressions that they may not know.

YouTube also offers a variety of **tools** that can help you translate captions, video title and descriptions to make your show more accessible to an international audience.

## Big Words

That said ... Don't be afraid to use big, impressive words like PACHYDERM and EPIDERMIS.

In fact, kids LOVE to show off big words that even grown-ups may not know. Just make sure that you describe them, reuse them and don't abuse them.

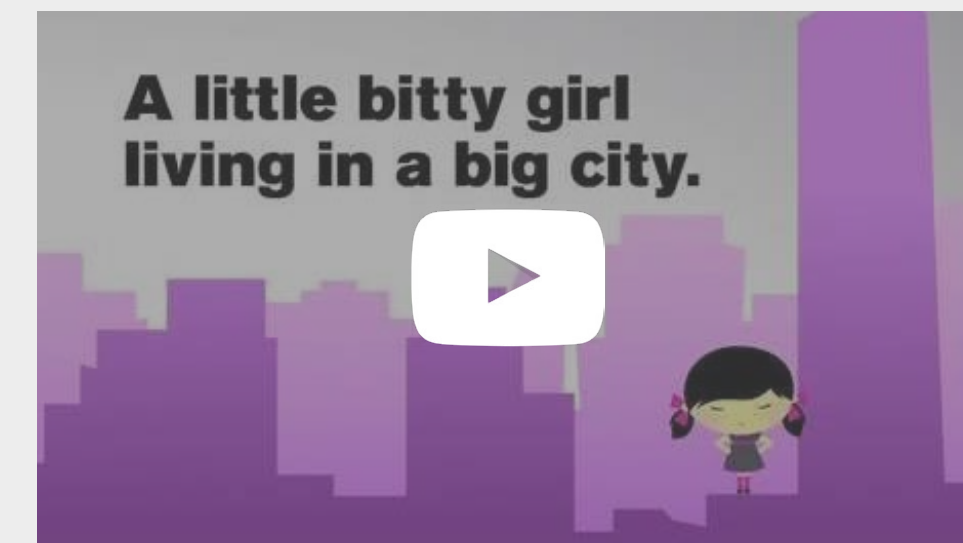
### Resources

- [Lexile Analyzer \(Lexile\)](#)
- [Tools to Translate Content \(YouTube Help\)](#)
- [Rhyming Dictionary \(RhymeZone\)](#)



#### The FuZees/I'm Me Sing Along

The word *unique* is introduced to a preschool audience through repetition, examples and by getting one character to ask the other what it means.



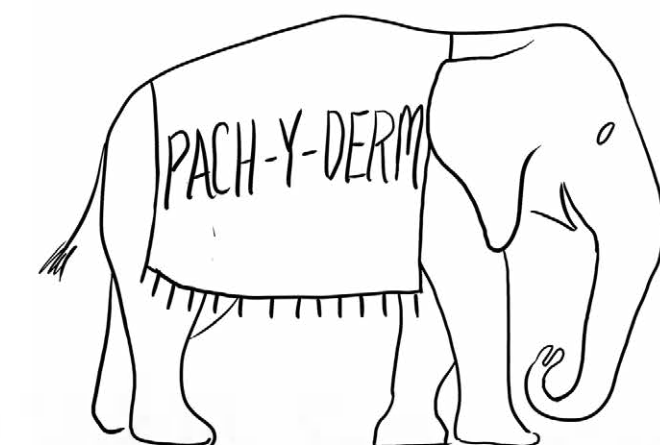
#### Flocabulary/Little Minnie

Flocabulary uses song to tackle 2<sup>nd</sup> grade vocabulary words in context.



#### BASHO & FRIENDS/Spanish greetings, feelings and locations

Basho immerses viewers in Spanish vocabulary with onscreen words, plenty of repetition and catchy beats.

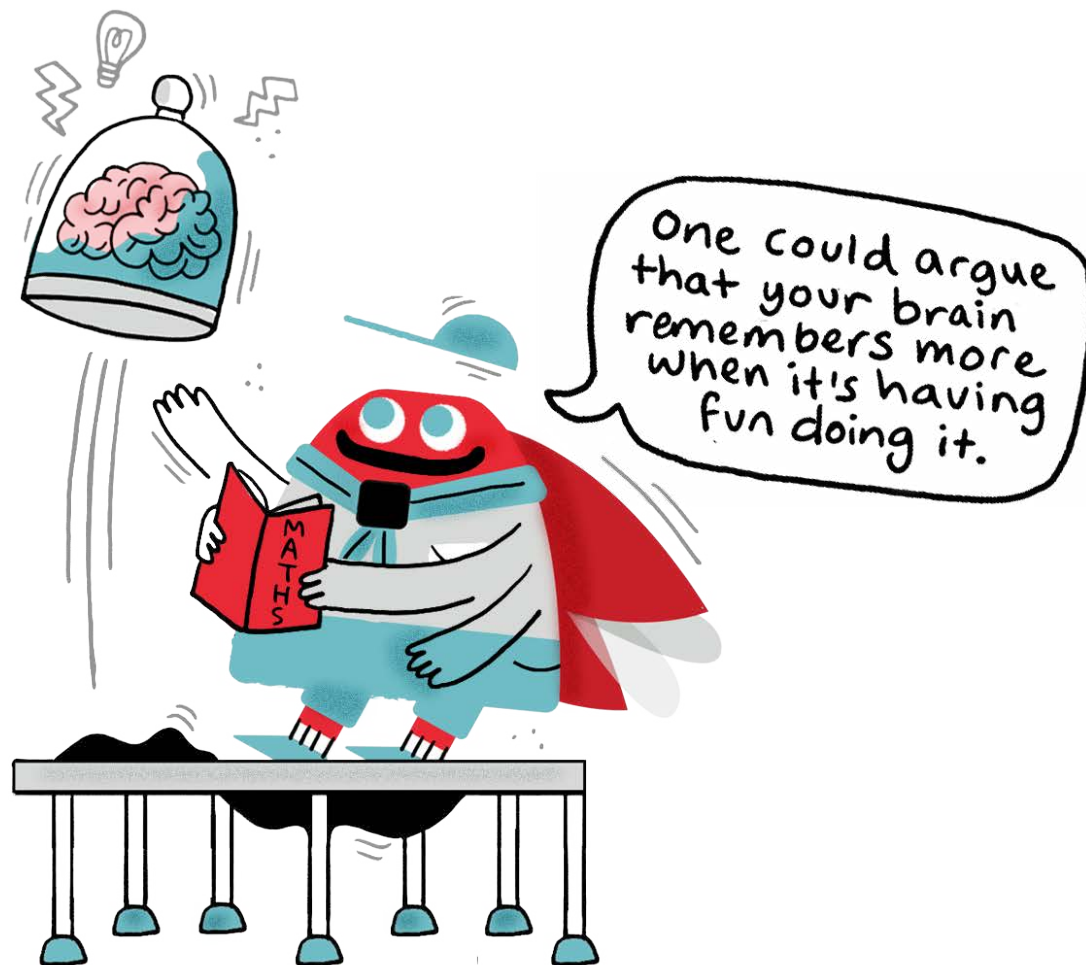




# Mnemonics

## Make It Stick

Remember that awesome teacher who taught you to remember the days of the month by counting on your knuckles? Or finding out that while Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain, he also helped you remember the colours of the rainbow? When you have important information to impart, help your viewers out by making it memorable.



## FIELD NOTES

TITLE

Tricks to Make the Learning Stick

Songs

Rhymes

Alliteration

Acronyms

Visual Mnemonics

Repetition

Humour

## Songs

Ever heard the first few notes of a song that you haven't listened to in years and suddenly found you knew all the words? Songs stick.

They offer a hook to remember everything from maths facts to languages to healthy habits. Remember, some of the longest stories ever told were passed down as songs and chants way before written language hit the scene.

### Resources

[Learning Through Music \(CommunityPlaythings\)](#)

[Songs and Rhymes to Foster Literacy \(EarlyChildhoodNews\)](#)

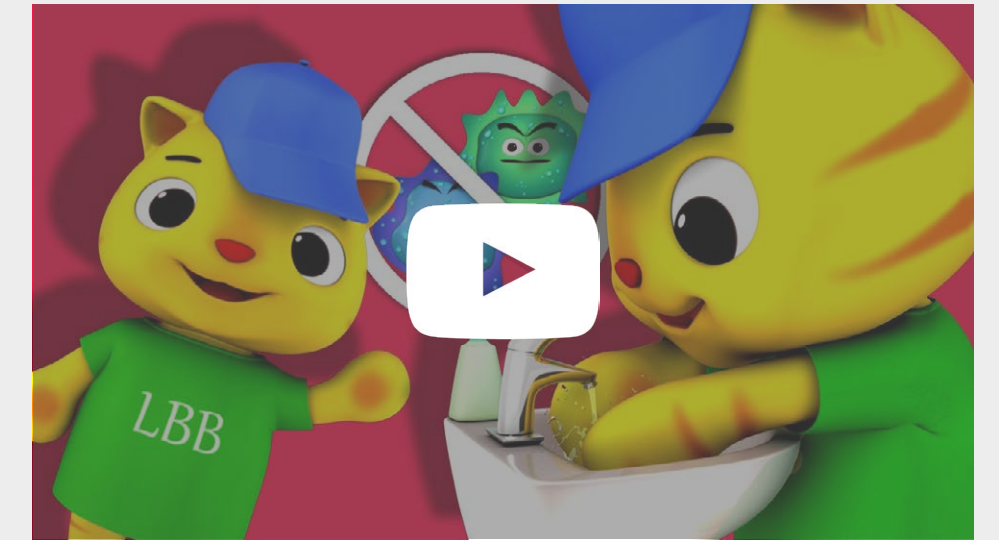
## Rhymes

Rhymes can lodge themselves so thoroughly in your brain that you simply can't forget them. Just try to 'unremember' these. We dare you.

*30 days hath September,  
April, June & November*



Flocabulary/Dividing Fractions



LittleBabyBum/Wash Your Hands Song for Children



Coma Niddy/Dinosaur Rap

*Beans, beans,  
good for your heart,  
the more you eat  
the more you...*

## Alliteration

Playful language, like alliteration, trips off the tongue to tackle troublesome topics with tranquillity.

It's also a lovely lesson for lads and lasses learning letter sounds. According to a study referenced by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, learning to discriminate phonemes, the building blocks of language, is a key indicator of reading success in the first two years of school.

Alliteration's saucy big sister, the tongue twister, is also great fun for oral acrobatics training.



### Resource

[Developing Phonemic Awareness \(ACSD\)](#)

## Acronyms

Sometimes the difference between success and struggle can be as simple as giving viewers a handy acronym. An oldie but goodie, for example:



*Order of operations:  
Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally  
(Parentheses, Exponents, Multiply,  
Divide, Add, Subtract)*



StoryBots/ABC Song: The Mighty M

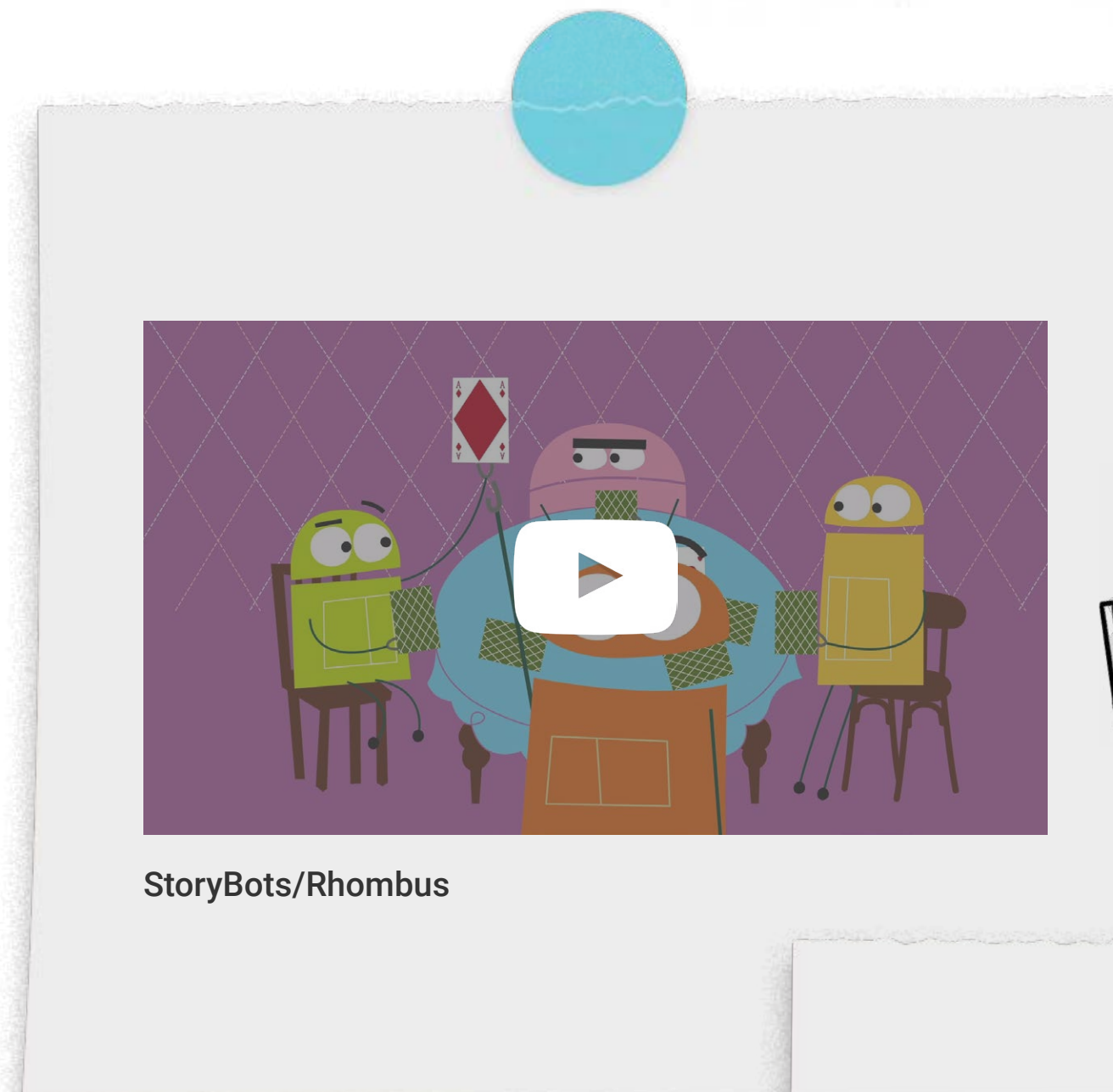


Flocabulary/Order of Operations - PEMDAS

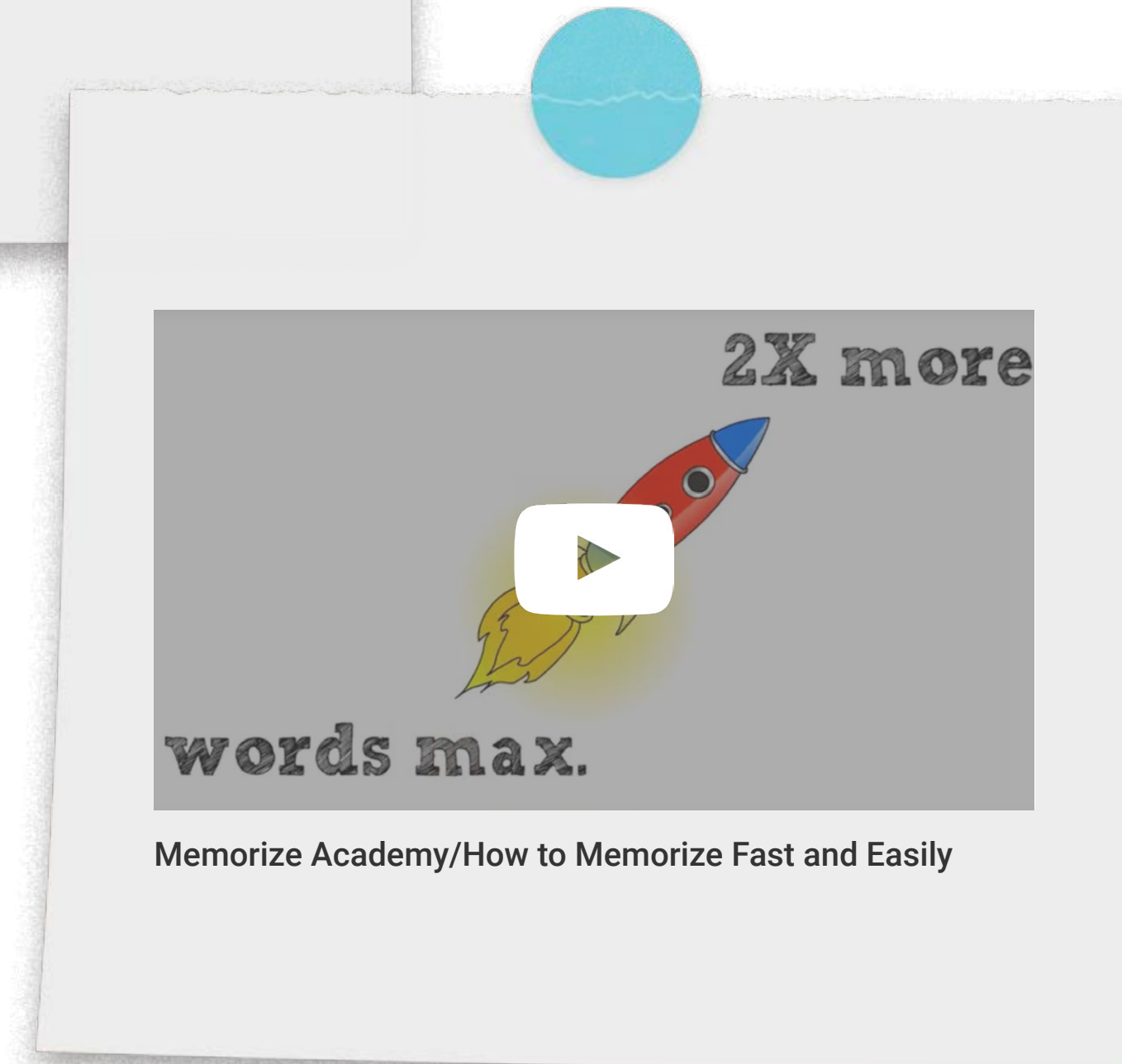
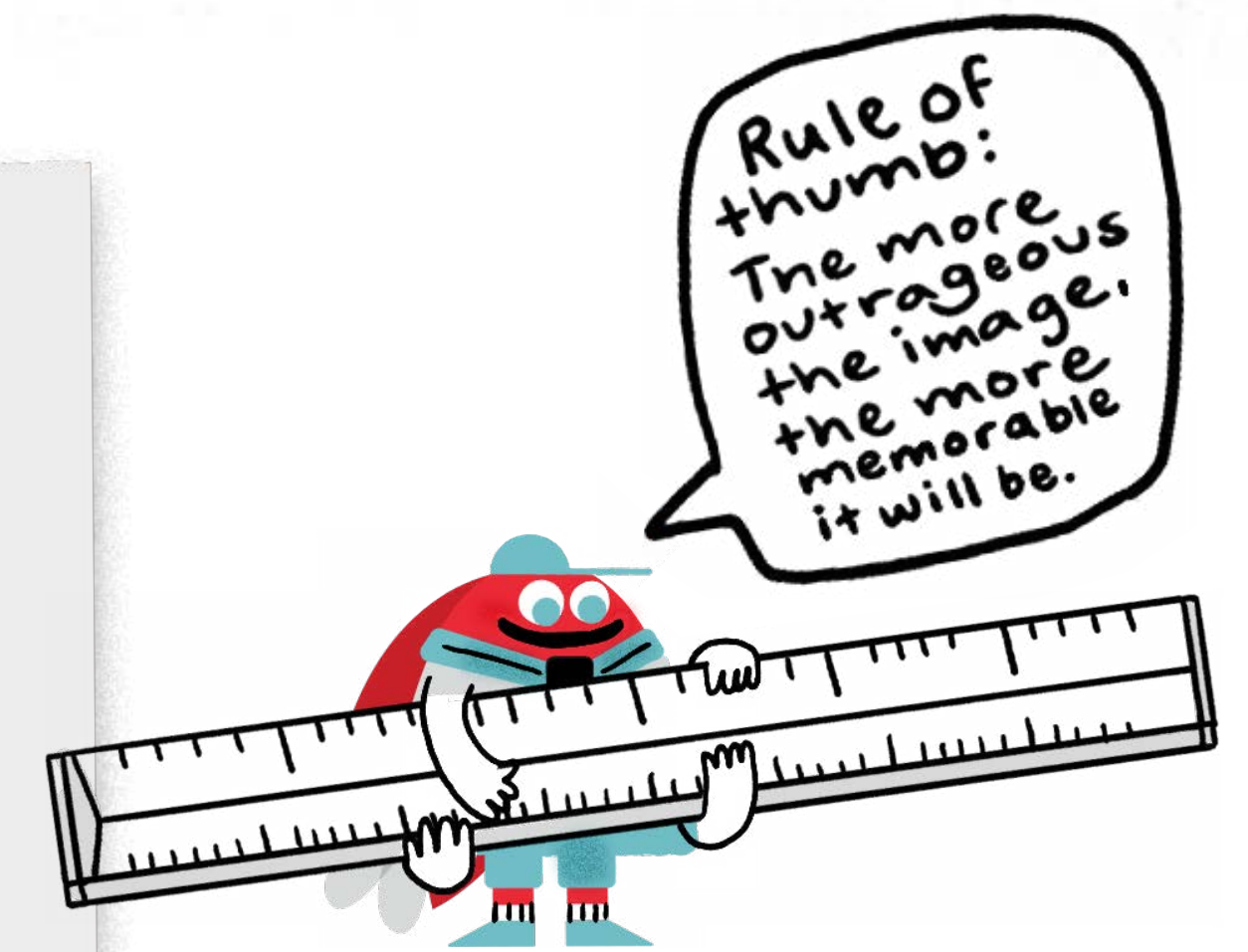
## Visual Mnemonics

Give the old grey matter a leg up.

Visual mnemonics can be much more effective than verbal mnemonics alone – especially for longer lists of material.



StoryBots/Rhombus



Memorize Academy/How to Memorize Fast and Easily



## Repetition

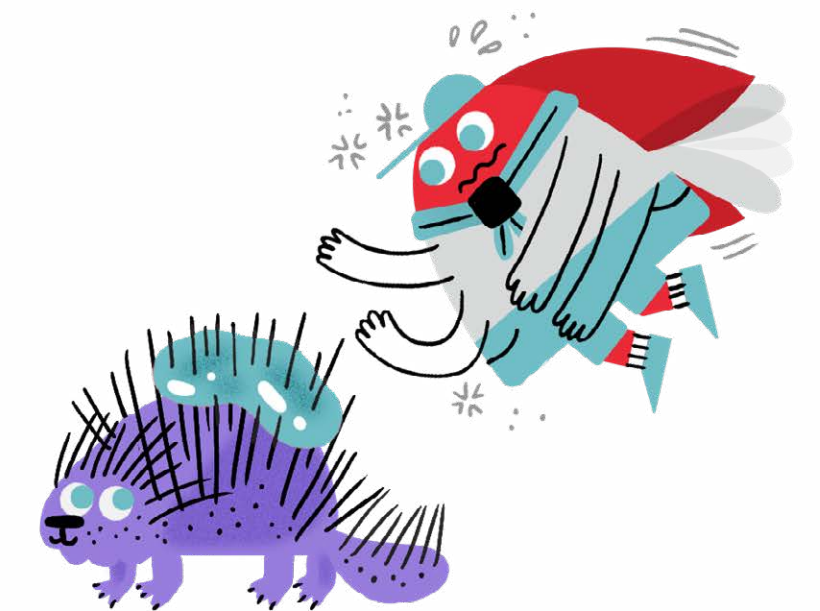
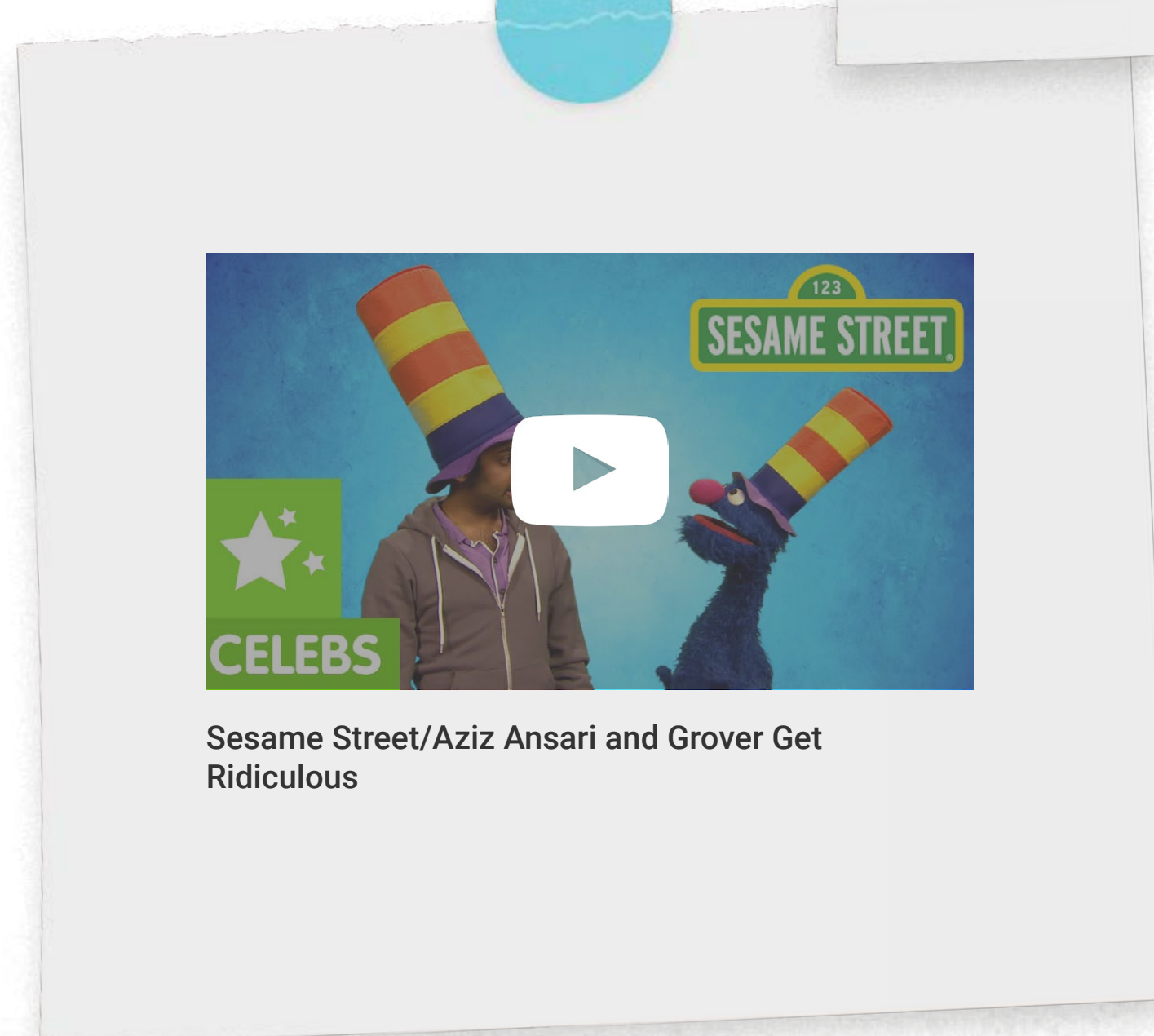
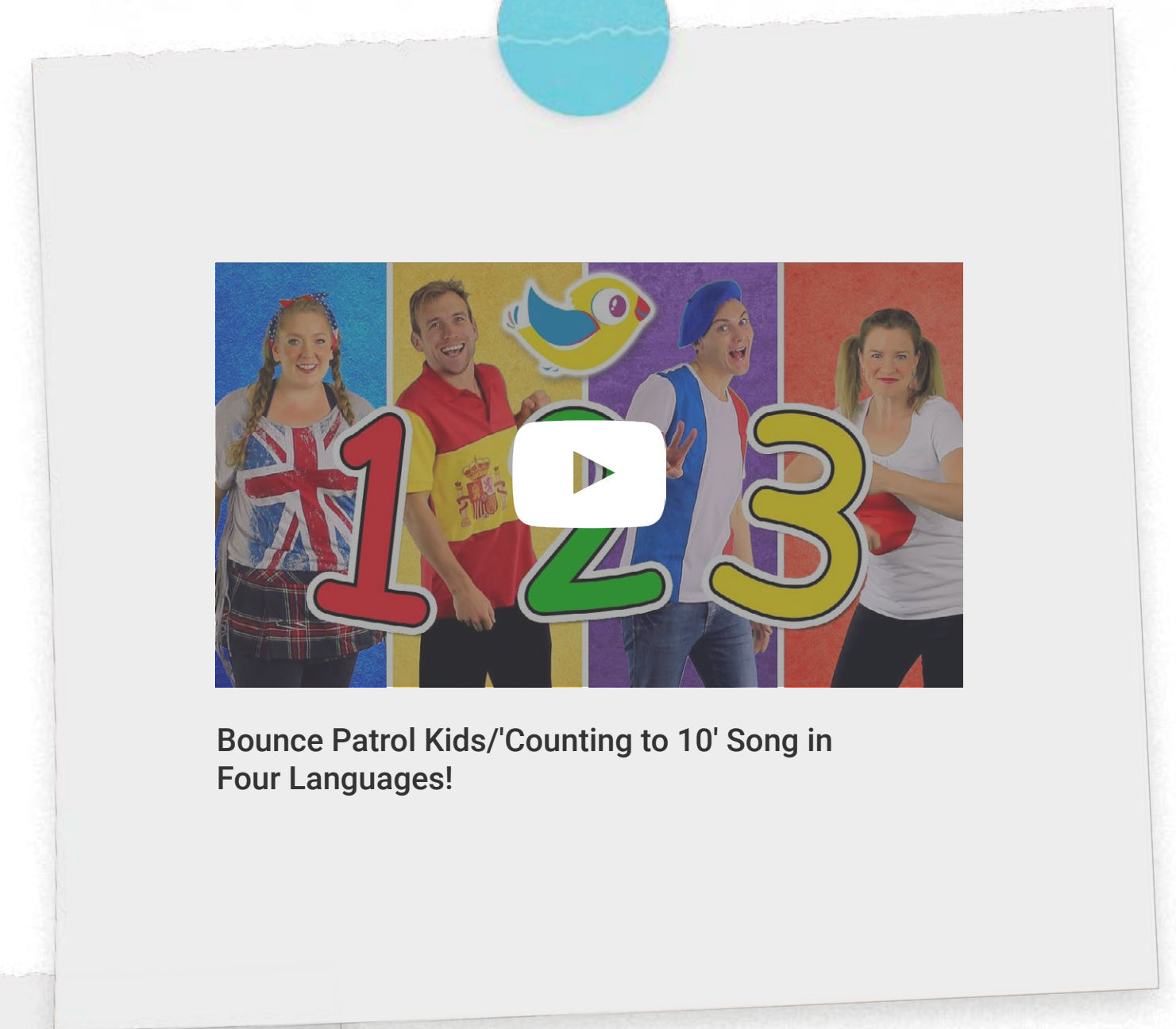
Repetition is especially important for the younger age range.

The youngest members of the family often need concepts reinforced several times in order to benefit and feel a sense of mastery. Also, you can never be sure that the person on the other end is listening.

So, try giving audio and visual prompts to your audience to alert them that something \*important\* is coming – and then come back to it later in case they missed it.

## Humour

Giggles can be more than just a good time. Funny scenarios will stick to kids like putty on a porcupine.





# Claims

## Don't Over-Promise

Thumbnails and metadata, which includes video titles, tags and descriptions, can be very helpful for your viewers – and for the success of your channel.

But, whatever variety of learning you feature, refrain from making wild claims about its impact. Avoid claims like: Watching your show will help viewers get early admittance to Oxford. Or leap tall buildings in a single bound. Or master the technique of alternate ear wiggling. These things simply are NOT attainable with your show alone.

**Note:** Please refer to the [Misleading metadata and Misleading thumbnail policies](#) in [YouTube's Community Guidelines](#).



## FIELD NOTES

TITLE

Tips for Video Thumbnails  
and Metadata

*Be Honest*

*Be Specific*

*Be Carefree*



## Be Honest

Be honest about what your show offers (see Goals). This starts with the thumbnail, which should be appropriate for kids. Next, the video title needs to accurately represent the video content and be grammatically correct in syntax. This means no abuse of keywords to optimise for search and discovery, and proper use of metadata. Never deceive viewers about what kind of content they can expect. In addition to gaining the confidence of families, being honest about your show can help you avoid harmful criticism and backlash.



## Be Specific

Help parents, caregivers and teachers find what they need by being specific and accurate in your video titles, tags and descriptions. If they know that it's easy to search your channel – and you deliver the goods – they'll probably come back for more. Please select a reasonable number of tags that most closely reflect your video content. If you are hoping your video will be used in schools, consider including the academic standards that your video supports.

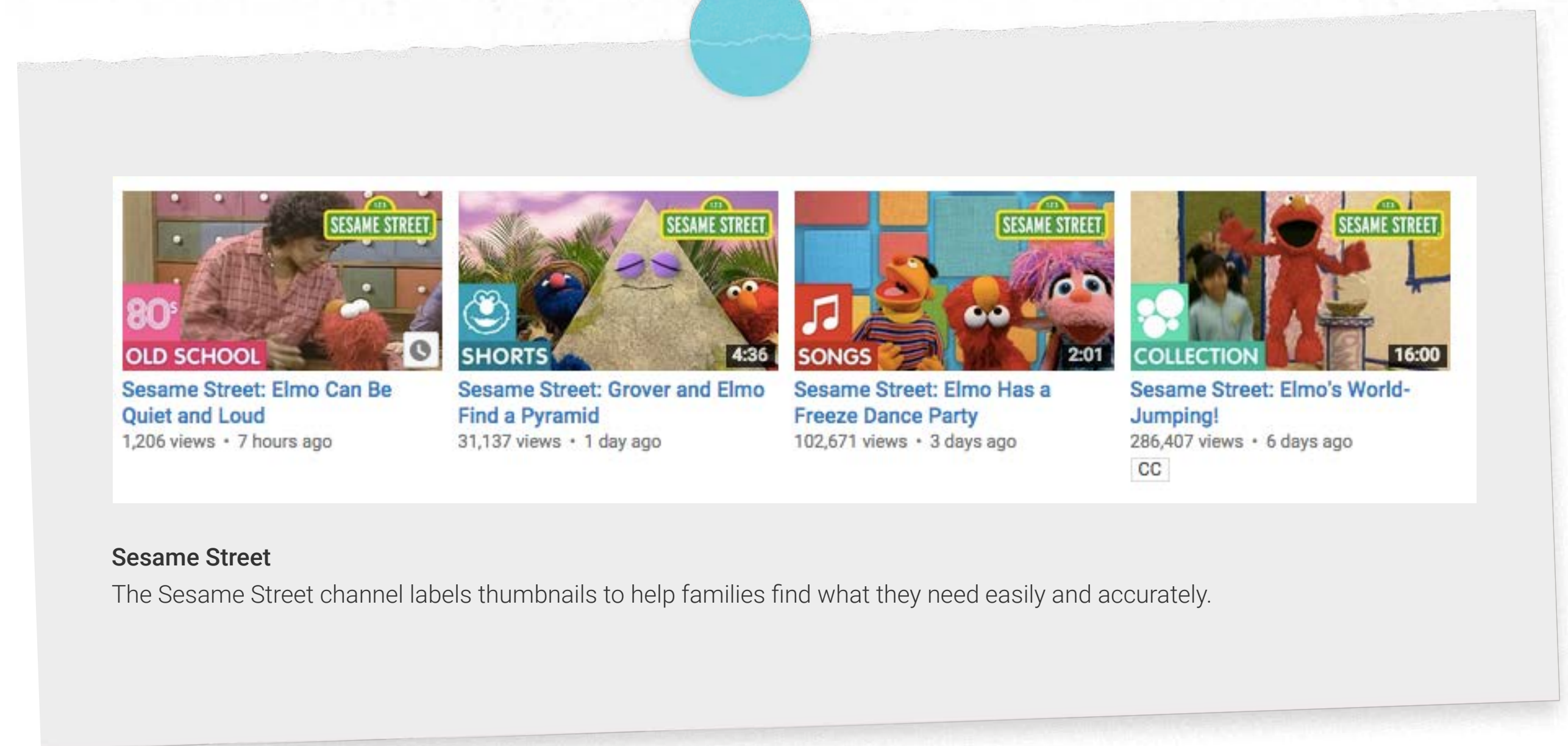
## Be Careful

When it comes to family-friendly media, there is a big difference between words of discovery, like *Explore* and *Introduce*, and words with implied outcomes, like *Teach and Master*. These types of claims almost always require serious research, an educational expert – and a lawyer.



### Resources

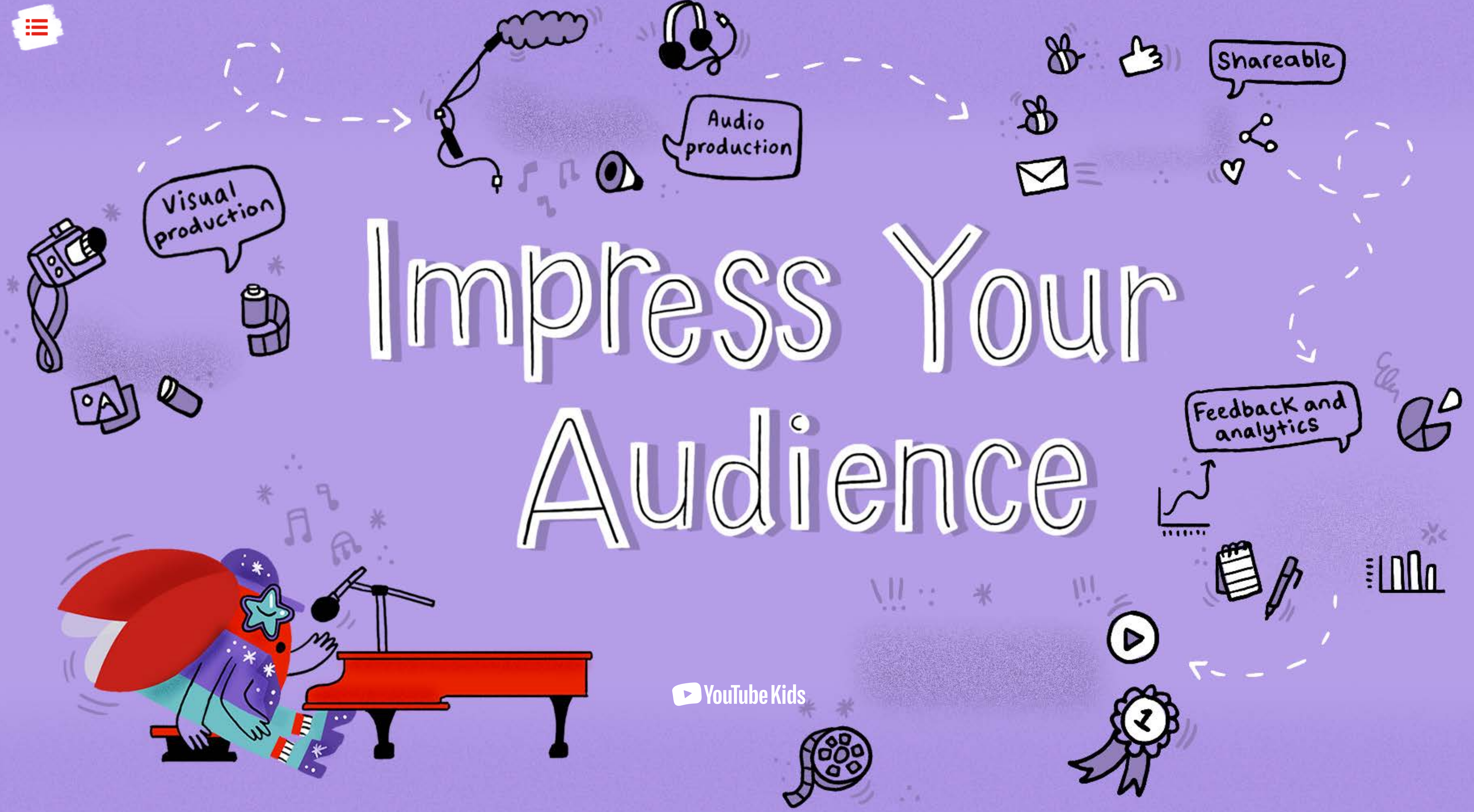
[Make Great Thumbnails \(Creator Academy\)](#)



### Crash Course Kids

Crash Course Kids lists the Next Gen Science Standards covered in each video in the description area.

# Impress Your Audience





So, now that you have an engaging, enriching show plan just right for your audience, here are a few tips and tricks to avoid common pitfalls in production – and to help make your family-friendly show exciting to share.





# Looks

## Visual Production

Put your show in the best light – and colour and focus – for your viewers.

The techniques that you choose will depend on your content, but here are some things to consider when it comes to family-friendly visual production.



### Resource

[Lighting and Camera \(Creator Academy\)](#)





## Get Organised

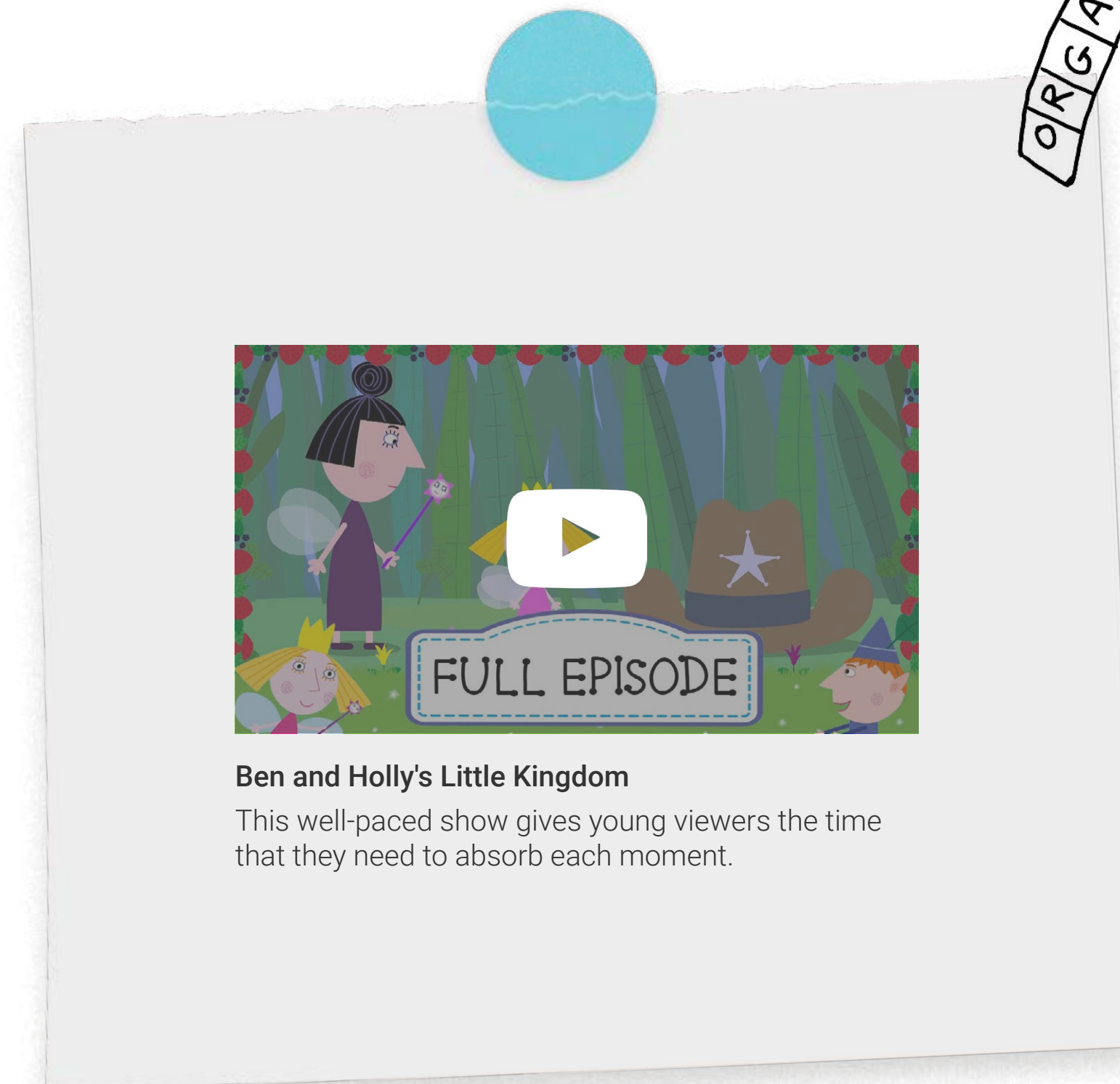
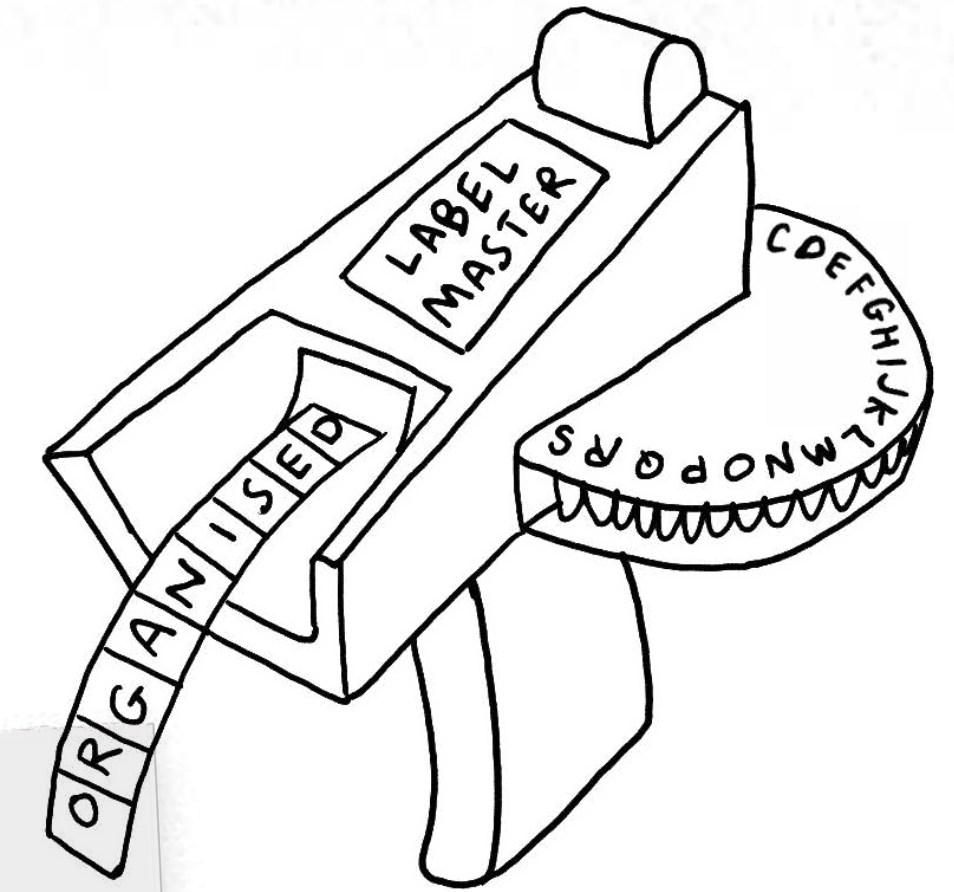
Make it easy for your audience to find and enjoy your delightful show and channel.

Take a look at the [Top Strategies for the YouTube Kids App](#) for family-friendly organisation tips to make your channel look good even before the first second of viewing.

## Pleasant Pacing

Take time to smell the roses.

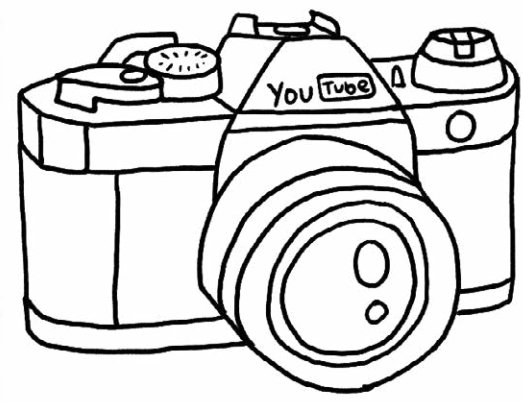
Remember that younger members of the family consume media and knowledge at a different pace than grown-up viewers. They are all about knowledge acquisition, whereas adults tend to triage information rapidly to determine the best categories and associations. Avoid hyper jump-cuts to welcome younger viewers. If you move too quickly, they may miss important points – and lose interest.



### Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom

This well-paced show gives young viewers the time that they need to absorb each moment.





## Frame and Focus

Think of the camera as the helpful tour guide.

Use your shots to help kids make connections and grasp the important elements immediately. Thoughtful framing and focus become even more critical when you are dealing with curriculum that may be new and challenging for your viewers.



### Baby Einstein/Baby MacDonald

These videos use an easy-to-read font, large words and clear focus to make the word-to-image connection hard to miss.



### The Pop Ups/All These Shapes

This catchy song moves quickly and appeals to all ages, but the words and images are clear enough for viewers to make connections.



## Conscientious Colours

Whether you are working in animation or live action, or something in-between, thoughtful colour palettes can help children focus on key elements – and make your show consistent and recognisable. Your show's colour palette can reflect your personal style and sensibilities, but there are a few guidelines to consider for the young eyeballs in the family.

### Avoid Sensory Overload

Too many colours at once can muck up the works. Use colour explosions strategically – and sparingly.



### Be Bold

Bold outlines and highlights can be useful tools to help young family members focus on key characters and curriculum.



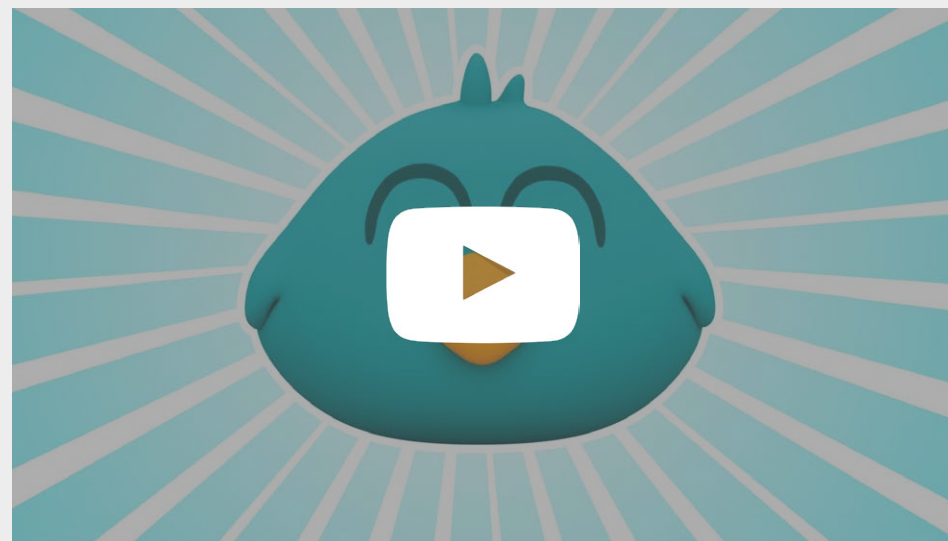
**Debbie and Friends/Willy Won't Smile for the Camera**  
Bold outlines make the characters pop and help viewers focus on the action.



**Super Simple ABCs/The Super Simple Alphabet Song (Uppercase)**  
Clear highlights help young viewers follow along and reinforce the letter-learning curriculum.

### Be Clean

Clean and simple backdrops can help focus attention.



#### Pocoyo/The Best Moments of Sleepy Bird!

Clean white backdrops allow the playful Pocoyo characters to take centre stage.



#### Peppa Pig/Compilation 1

Peppa Pig uses a consistent colour palette with a simple backdrop inspired by children's drawings.

### Be Consistent

A thoughtful colour palette can lend your show a recognisable look and feel and let viewers relax right into the content.

### A Note on Colour-blindness

8% of boys are colour-blind to some degree (and a much smaller percentage of girls). It's good to be aware of colour-blindness – especially when integrating curriculum. Some viewers would NOT be able to count red cherries on a green tree no matter how hard they tried.



#### Resource

[Introduction to Colorblindness \(WeAreColorblind\)](#)

## Readable Font

Pretend for a moment that you have just landed from another planet and need to sort all the letters and numbers that are the same into neat little piles.

Let's face the cold, hard facts. There are some crazy lowercase **gs** and bonkers **7s** out there. And don't even get us started on cursive. So, when it comes to letters and numbers on screen, you have to know what you're dealing with – and who will be reading it.

## Font Facts (and Opinions)

### Go Big

Bigger, clearer fonts are best for beginning and aspiring readers.

### Avoid Confusion

Take care to distinguish easily confused letters, like uppercase *i* and lowercase *L*.

### Stick and Ball

Stick and Ball fonts and Zaner-Bloser fonts are safe choices for early readers.

### Write vs Read

Fonts for learning to *write* may differ from those most suitable for reading.



Aa



### Resources

[Reading on YouTube Kids \(Kidscreen\)](#)



# Sounds

## Audio Production

Sound quality is key – your content should travel clearly and melodically from device to eardrums. Here are a few things to bear in mind as you create your smooth sounds.

*Oooze emgt murphenshhhhBRP \**

\* Translation: Use a good microphone.



## FIELD NOTES

TITLE

Tips for Making Your Show  
Sound Good

Use a Good Microphone

Pace Dialogue for Audience

Cast Pleasing Voices

Consider Voice-overs

Keep Background Music Subtle

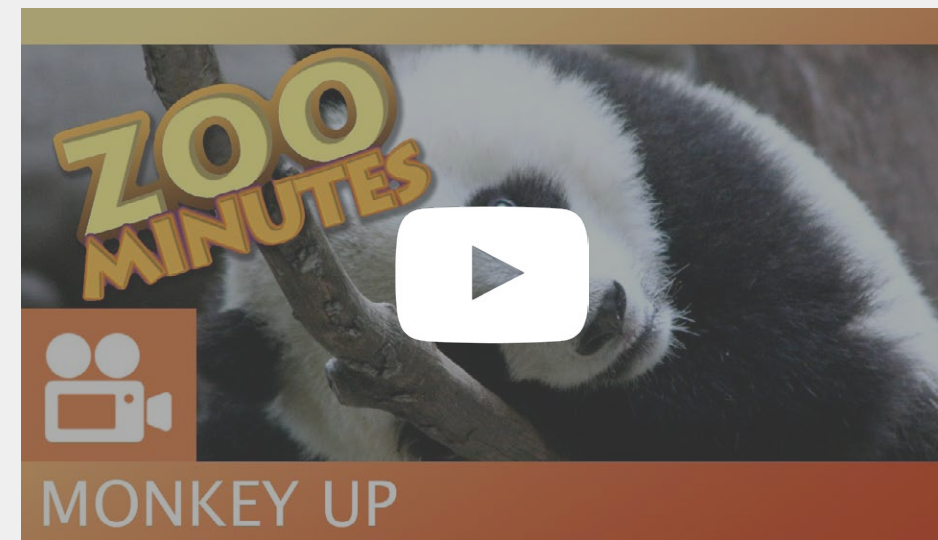
Shazam!

## Pace Dialogue for Audience

Slow down to let children catch up, especially when presenting curriculum. Give viewers the time that they need to hear – and process – your excellent content. Try mixing dialogue with music, visuals and sometimes even . . . . . silence.

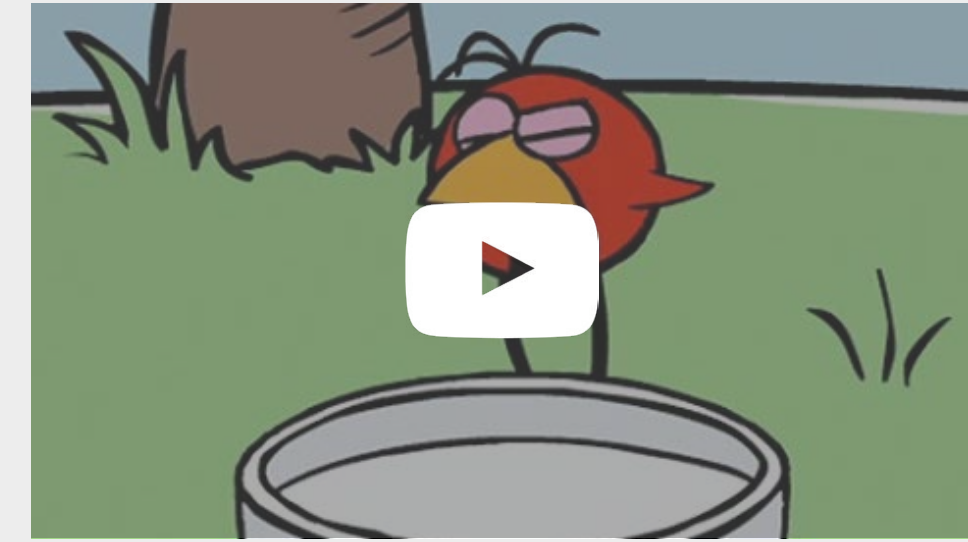
## Cast Pleasing Voices

Would your show sound good in the dark? On a long car journey? Families should love listening. Whether your show features your own voice or a cast of wacky characters (or both!), make sure that you prioritise pleasing voices.



### Air Bud TV/Monkey Up-Zoo Minutes

Narrator Mort the Monkey lends loads of playful personality to the Monkey Up series.



### Peep and the Big Wide World/The Disappearing Drink

Peep and the Big Wide World features pleasing character voices, a soothing voice-over and a pace that allows viewers time to work out problems along with characters.

## Consider Voice-overs

Voice-overs can help kids follow the action and lend a comforting storybook feel to your show. They also can help reinforce key concepts – or involve viewers in the story by breaking the fourth wall to ask questions.



## Keep Background Music Subtle

Good background music can help set the tone, add drama, infuse humour, underscore emotions and make your show feel cohesive and ALIVE!

Not-so-good background music can distract from your focus, hurt your brain, obscure dialogue and generally irritate ears.



Masha and The Bear/Recipe For Disaster



Sick Science!/Homemade Projector





## Shazam!

We all know sound effects are a one-way ticket to happy land. For that reason alone, it's worth it to create an awesome soundscape for viewers to enjoy. But, sound effects can be amusing *and* useful.

Here are some ways to maximise the effect of your sound effects:

Accentuate choices (DOINK!)

Focus activity on the screen (WHOOSH)

Act as a mnemonic device (Buckle up! Click click HONK click)

Announce transitions or recurring segments (BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP)



### Resources

[Sound and music \(Creator Academy\)](#)

[Public Domain Songlist \(pdinfo\)](#)

[Royalty Free Music and SFX \(PartnersInRhyme\)](#)

SPLART!!  
GURGLE  
GURGLE

SNARE!



TuTiTuTV/Phone



Action Movie Kid/James vs. Shark

BURP!  
YouTube Kids



# Buzz

## Sharing is Caring

Making content go viral on YouTube Kids is challenging because kids can't comment or share videos from YouTube Kids.

But that doesn't mean that you can't create buzz that makes families want to watch your show. So, how can you create juicebox buzz about your inspiring, good-looking, sweet-sounding, massively enriching family-friendly show?



## FIELD NOTES

TITLE

Tips for Making Your  
Show Shareable

*Tackle Pain Points*

*Give a Giggle*

*Tug a Heartstring*

*Level the Playing Field*

*Support Showing Off*



## Tackle Pain Points

Children face all sorts of challenges and bumps in the road as they learn and grow.

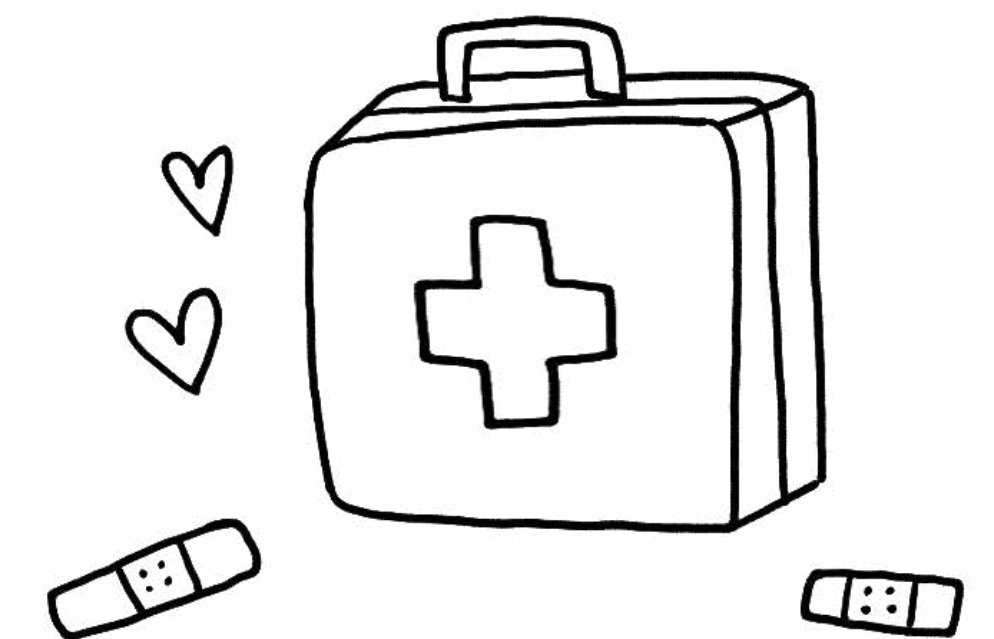
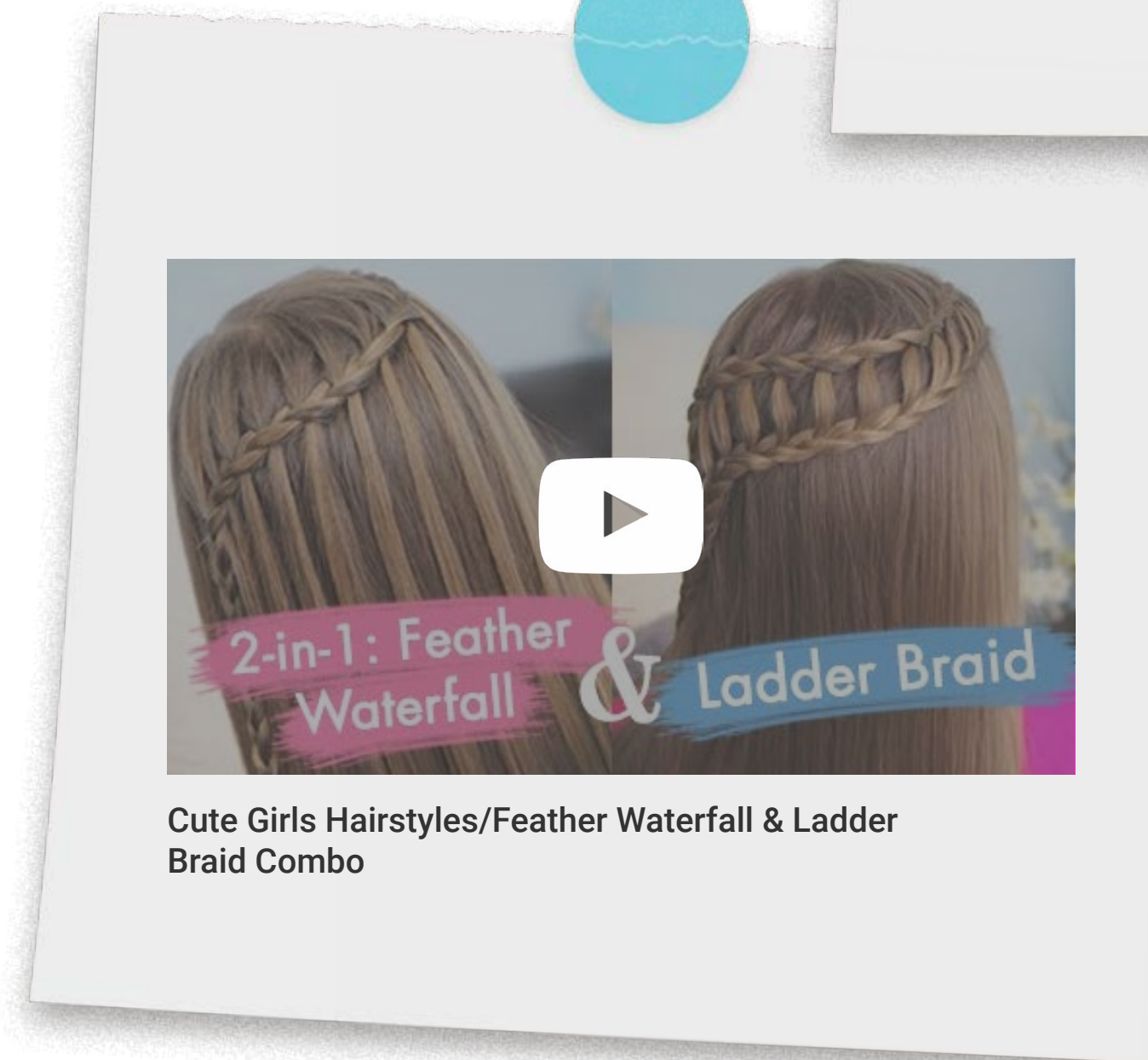
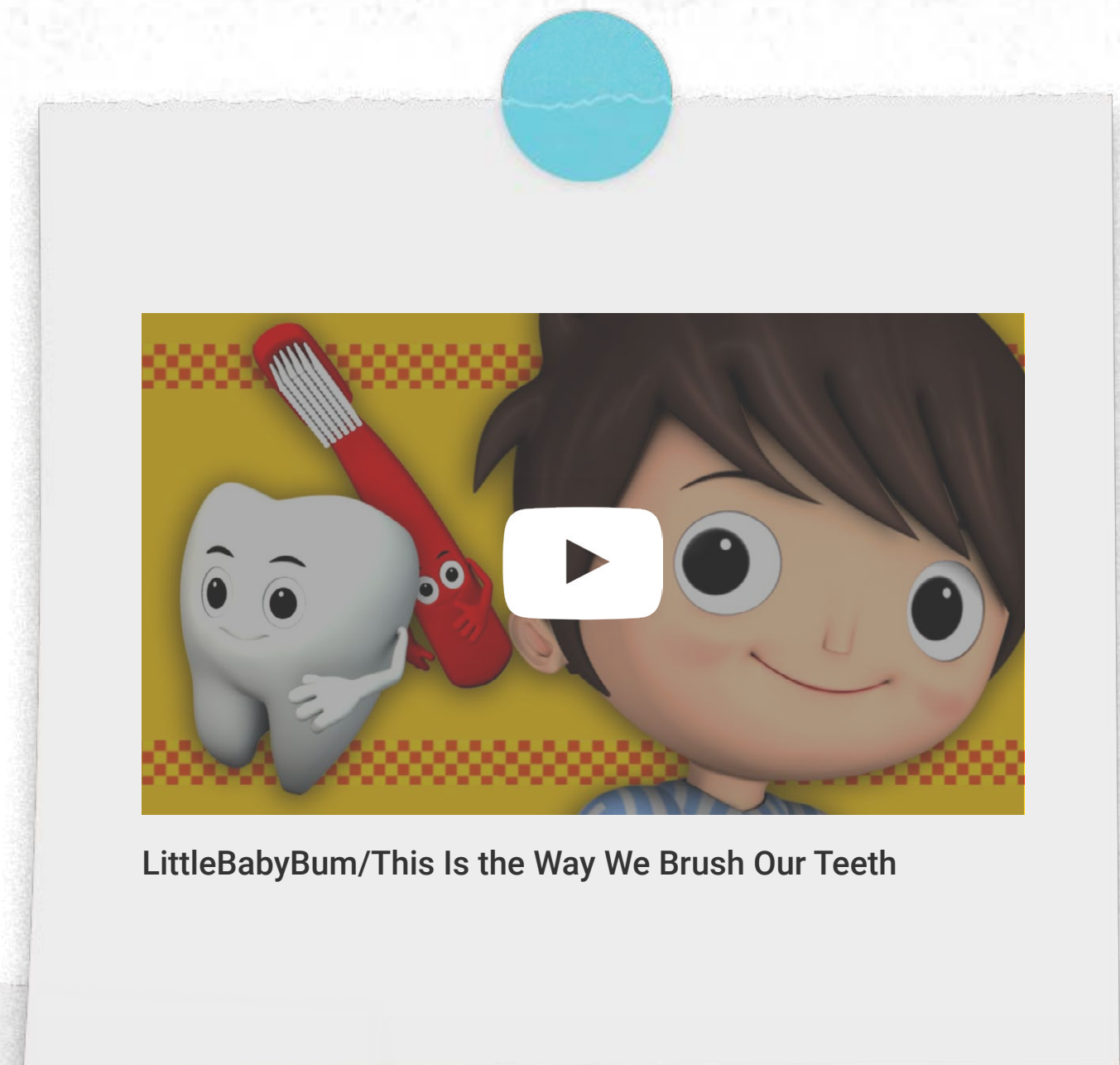
Can you help ease transitions? Fashion crises? Times-table tedium? Can your show give kids tools that they can use in real life?

So, do some research. Talk to kids about what bothers them. Talk to parents, caregivers and teachers about the challenges the children in their lives face. Visit parent blogs. Become an expert on common kid struggles – and offer help when you can!



### Resource

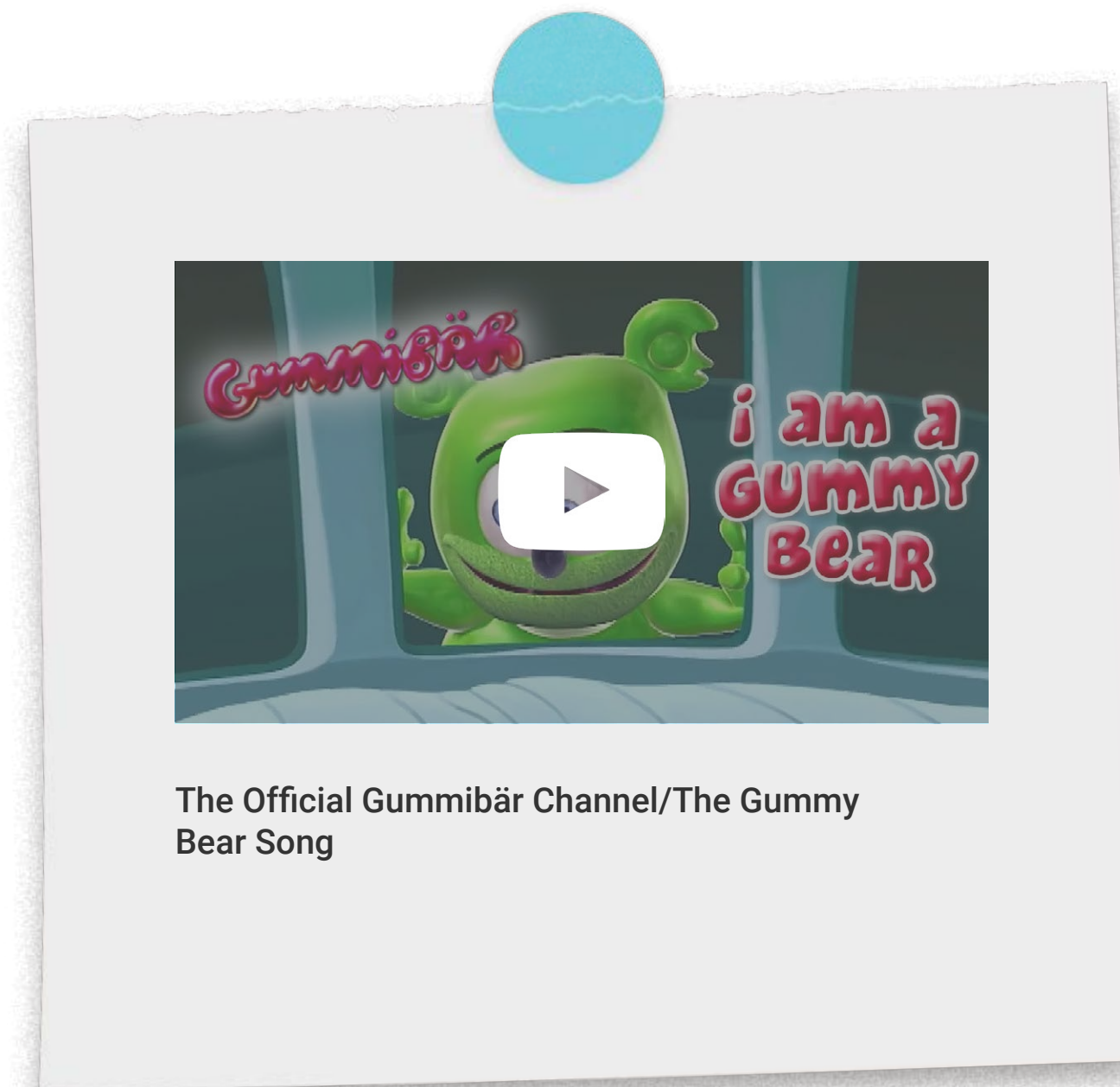
[What Can Parents Do? \(PBS\)](#)





## Give a Giggle

Basically, everyone needs new material. And giggles are naturally contagious. So, if it makes sense for your show, consider side-splitting jokes, silly sketches, wacky voices and kooky catchphrases that families will be eager to talk about.





## Tug a Heartstring

Some of the most popular videos are the ones that get you in the gut. Videos that foster empathy leave a lasting impact on viewers. So, create a moment that feels good – and important – to share.



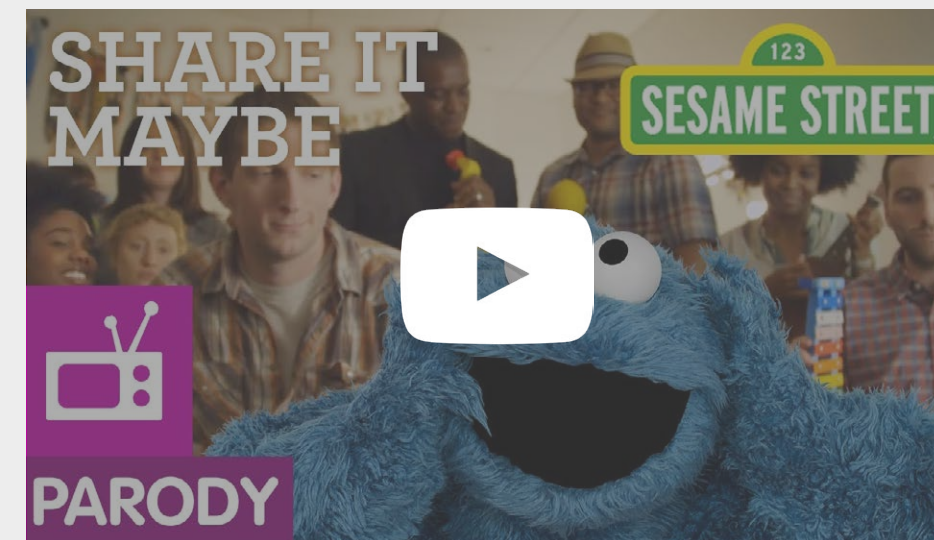
## Level the Playing Field

Without parents, there would be no family audience. So, how can you let them know that you've got their backs?

One way is to include references and jokes that work on multiple levels. These 'winks' can surprise and delight the more senior members of the family – and inspire them to tell others about your show. Forty years in, Sesame Street is still nailing multi-level family content, and it shows in the more than 20 million views of *Share It Maybe*.



SoulPancake/Street Compliments



Sesame Street/Share It Maybe

## Support Showing Off

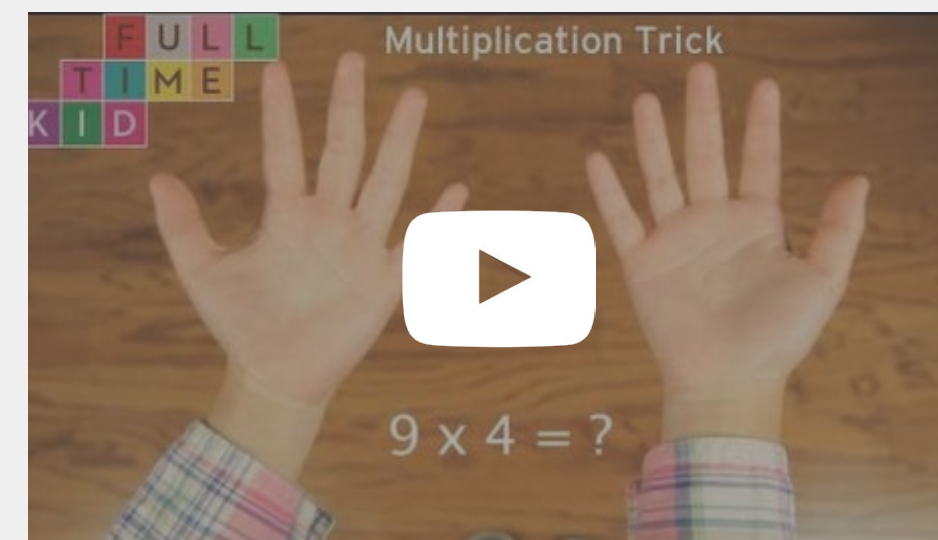
Give kids something to brag about – big words, amazing facts, incredible moves, crazy computations – basically anything that will make *their* audience ask, "Hey, where'd you learn that??"



MakeMeGeniusIndia/Solar System Planets Interesting Facts for Kids



CharlisCraftyKitchen/WATERMELON POPSICLES



Full-Time Kid/Multiplication Trick

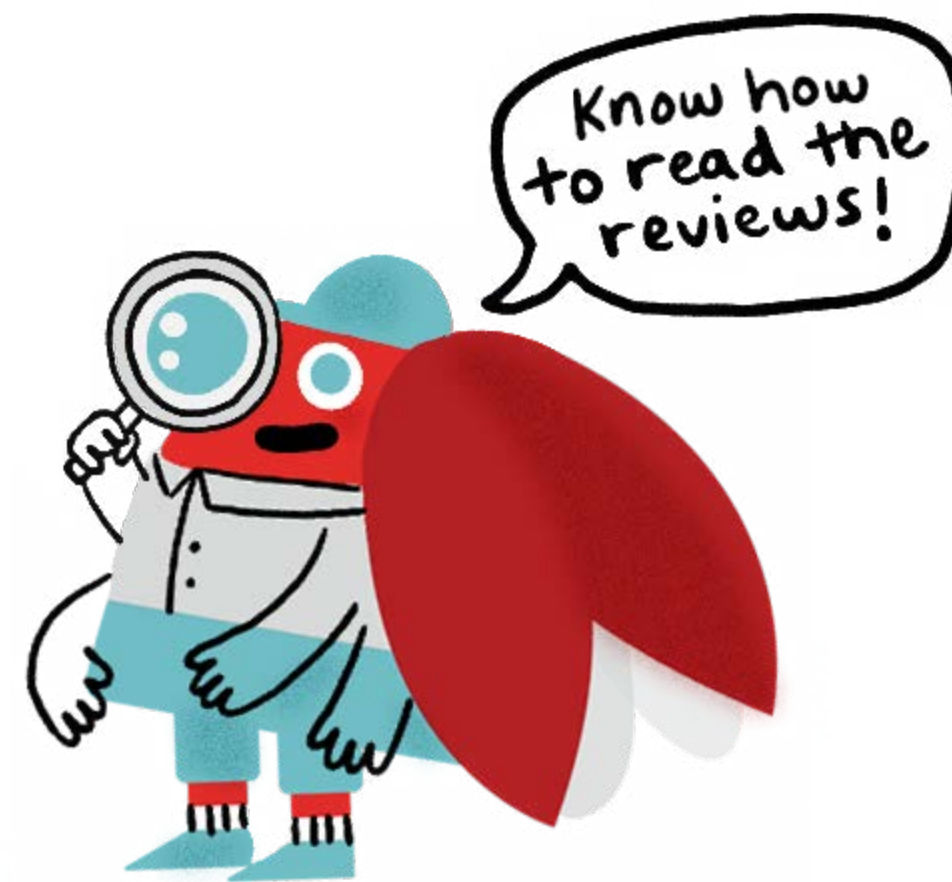


# Reviews

## Feedback and Analytics

Test out your material early and often with the real experts – your core audience. Depending on your project, you may want to check in with kids and families at different stages of development, like:

*Concept → Script → Character Design*  
*→ Animatic → Final Video*



## Avoid Leading Questions

Encourage viewers to voice their own opinions.

For example, you may ask, "Did you think there were funny parts?" If the answer is yes, you can follow up with a question that puts the viewer in the driver's seat, like, "What was the funniest part?"

## Ask Probing Questions

Ask follow-up questions that can help you understand the underlying reasons for a response.

For example, "Do you want to watch it again?" is a great place to start. Then, follow up with what you really want to know: "Why?" "Why not?" and maybe even "When?" and "Where?" These probing questions are important for generating feedback that can help you refine your content.

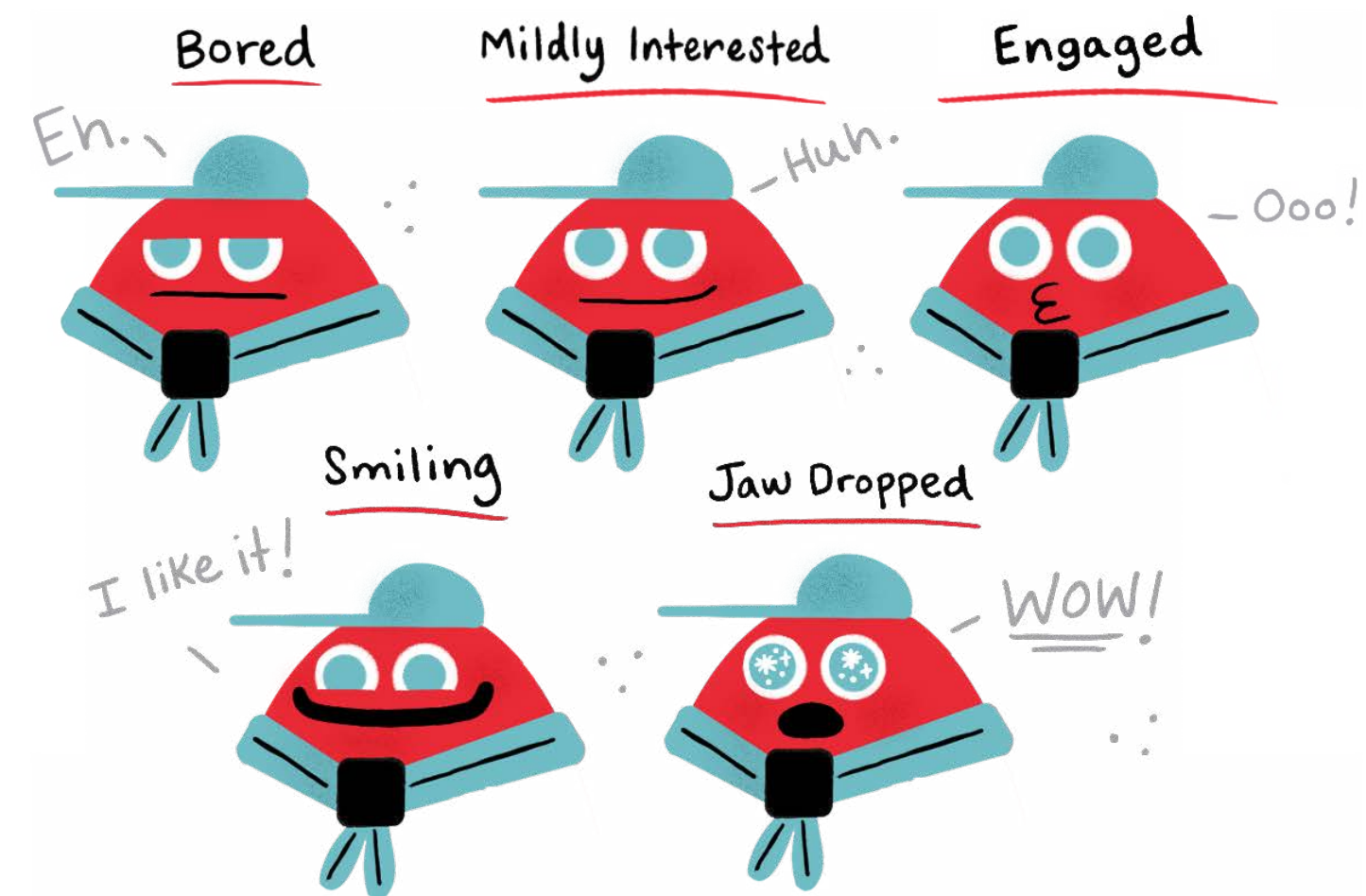
\* *See Worksheet F*



## Diverse Test Groups

The more diverse the test group, the better.

Talk to families. Test your material out with a range of ages – you may find that your show has wider appeal than expected. And, viewer tests don't have to be formal affairs. You can share character art, try out a joke or just see if families 'get it'.



## Assessing Analytics

YouTube Analytics can help you gather viewing statistics across the whole wide world. Find out aggregated reports of where folks are watching and for how long to help you evolve and improve your show for your eager audience.





The End

*The End*



The Creating for YouTube Kids Field Guide  
is brought to you by YouTube Family  
& Learning and YouTube Spaces.



# Contributors

We would like to thank all the YouTube creators who lent their exemplary work to this Field Guide, as well as the family media and educational experts listed below.

## **Rachael Sophia Tobener**

*Writer and Interactive Designer*

Rachael is the Lead Contributor for YouTube's *Creating for Families Field Guide* and has developed award-winning videos, toys, mobile apps and books for numerous companies, including Disney, Crayola, LeapFrog and Discovery Kids.

## **Alice Cahn**

*Consultant, Youth and Family Media*

Alice Cahn is a youth media consultant working with clients that include Harvard's Graduate School of Education and YouTube Kids. Cahn founded the award-winning STOP BULLYING SPEAK UP project and was the Markle Foundation's Managing Director Interactive Media, President of Television and Film at Sesame Workshop, and head of PBS children's programming.

## **Anne E. Cunningham, Ph.D.**

*Professor, Human Development at University of California, Berkeley*

Dr Cunningham has served on the educational advisory boards of tech and educational media firms such as Sesame Street, Leapfrog, Scholastic and HMH. She is the author of *Book Smart: How to Develop and Support a Successful Motivated Reader*, which examines what parents and teachers can do to spark engagement and joy in learning to read.

## **Bob Hirshon**

*Programme Director for Technology and Learning, AAAS*

Bob produces the radio feature 'Science Update' at the American Association for the Advancement of Science and heads up a variety of innovative science education programmes, including KC Empower, Science NetLinks and Kinetic City. On XM Sirius radio's Kids' Place Live, he answers science questions as Bob the Science Slob.

## **Julie Clark**

*CEO weeSchool*

Creator of Baby Einstein, The Safe Side and the newly launched weeSchool, Julie is a former teacher considered one of the first 'makers'. From her home, Julie created a children's entertainment company that found international success and became one of the most iconic brands in the world. She is passionate about early childhood education.



## Contributors

### **Kathleen L. Huntley**

*Senior Health Educator, Kaiser Permanente*

Kathleen is thrilled to be part of a team that shares a common purpose of improving the experiences of children and their families. She is dedicated to using technology to inspire healthy habits and physical well-being, including the exciting trend of turning a sedentary medium into an active, multi-dimensional exploratory experience.

### **Karen Hill Scott, Ed.D.**

*Consultant, Children's and Family Media Content*

Dr Hill Scott is a leading contributor to children's media, having consulted on more than 2,500 episodes of produced television and video content. Her work incorporates FCC Compliance, diversity, age appropriateness and parent engagement. Shows include all formats: feature, animation, live action, documentary and magazine content, among them Humanitas and Emmy award winners.

### **Michael Cohen, Ph.D.**

*President, Michael Cohen Group, LLC*

Michael Cohen Ph.D. is a developmental psychologist and president of the Michael Cohen Group, LLC. For the past thirty years his work has focused on the intersection of education, development, media and children's well-being. He has been at the forefront of the Department of Education's research and evaluation work for the Ready-to Learn initiative and is regularly consulted in the development of educational digital content and technology.

### **Mike O'Connor**

*Creative Strategy and Audience Development*

Mike led strategy and development for Cool School, one of YouTube's longest running kids channels, introducing beloved characters like Drew Pendous, Crafty Carol and Ms. Booksy to kids everywhere. Mike is currently working with NBCUniversal to develop content and audiences across digital platforms.

### **Norman Stiles**

*Writer and Producer*

Norman Stiles was a writer/Head Writer on Sesame Street for 20 years. He co-created and was Executive Producer/Head Writer of the PBS series Between the Lions and Lomax the Hound of Music. He has received 15 Emmy Awards for his work in children's television.

### **Rick Fernandes**

*Children's Media Executive*

Rick Fernandes has been in children's television for more than 30 years. His background includes producing, directing and editing. His achievements include an Emmy for directing Disney Channel's Bear in the Big Blue House, as well as 11 Emmy nominations (2 producing, 5 directing and 4 editing).



## [Contributors](#)

### **Suzanne I. Barchers, Ed.D.**

*Writer at Large*

Suzanne has written more than 200 books for children and teachers. She has worked and consulted internationally for companies such as Weekly Reader, LeapFrog, LingoKids and Reading Rainbow. Past board memberships include the PBS Next Generation Media Advisory Board and the Association of Educational Publishers.

### **Tara Tiger Brown**

*Chief Encouragement Officer*

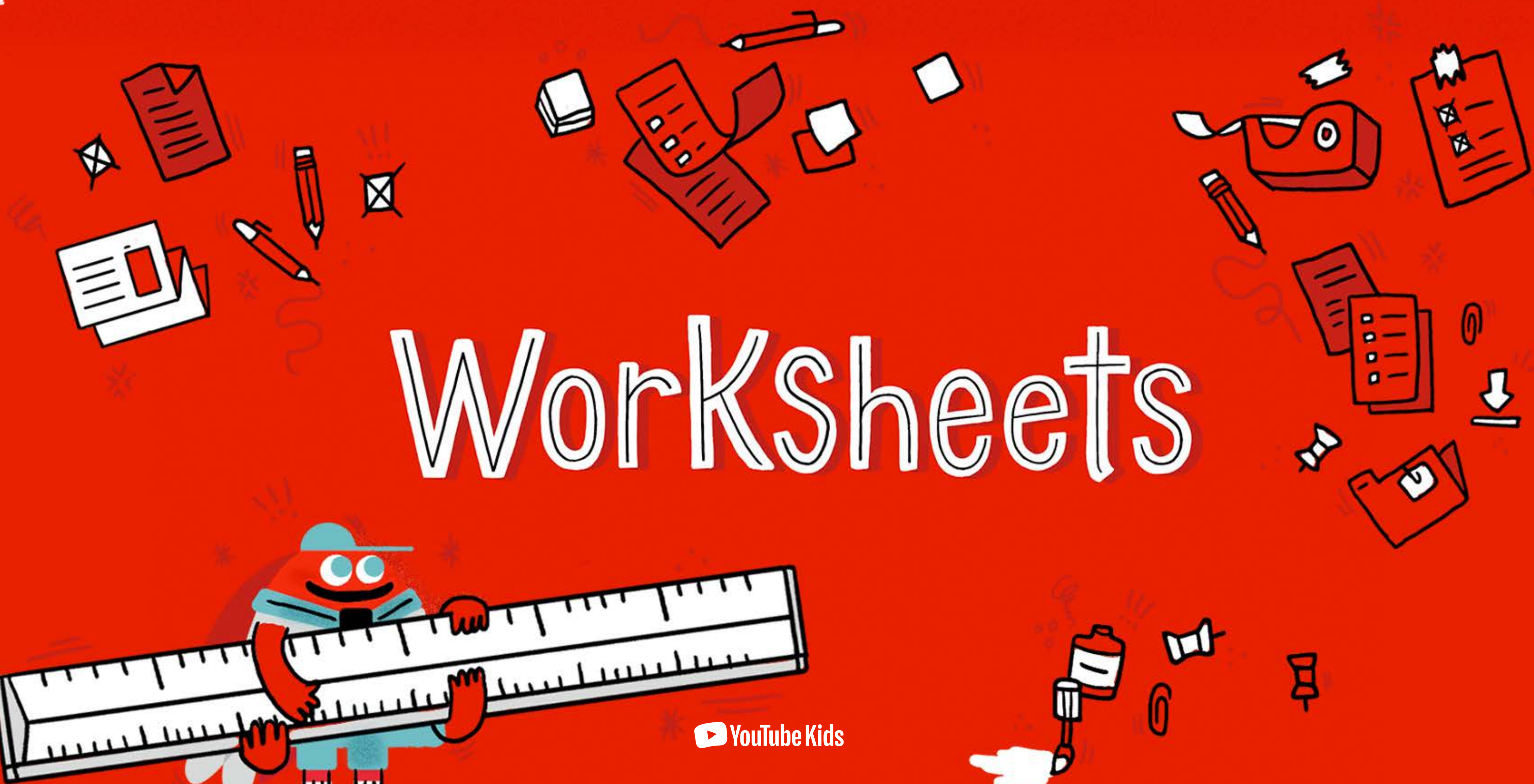
Tara is the founder of LA Makerspace, a non-profit community space that provides STEM learning opportunities to children in low-income neighbourhoods. She is also the founder of STEM-focused start-ups KitHub and Connected Camps, as well as Technical Director at the Digital Media Learning Research Hub.



# Worksheets



 YouTube Kids





# Worksheet A

## To Dos

### Directions

Chart your path to family content greatness.

Choose words that apply to your show and jot them down. Feel free to add your own.

KIND  
CONSISTENT  
SMART  
Inclusive  
Enriching  
Hilarious  
Diverse

Thoughtful  
DELIGHTFUL  
Ridiculous  
fASCINATING  
SURPRISING  
Comforting  
Inspiring



# Worksheet B

## To Don'ts

### Directions

Will families feel SAFE and EMPOWERED watching your show together? Fill in the checklist to see if you are on course.

IS YOUR SHOW:		YES	NO
INVASIVE	Do you invade privacy? Do you ask kids to do anything that's not OK with their families?		
VIOLENT	Is there gratuitous violence? Or unresolved conflicts? Are you modelling behaviour that you don't want kids to imitate?		
USING INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE	Do you use language that would NOT be welcome in a child's home or school?		
LEWD	Would you feel uncomfortable showing it to your mother? Your grandmother?		
INAPPROPRIATE ATTIRE	Are there elements in your scenes that could make your participants or some viewers uncomfortable (e.g. overly revealing attire showing bare skin or situations that could be misinterpreted)?		
SCARY	Will it cause nightmares?		
MEAN-SPIRITED	Would your characters be unkind to a shy 3-year-old?		
CONDESCENDING	Will kids feel belittled & less-than-smart watching it?		
IRRITATING	Will families just want to turn it off?		
MIND-NUMBING	Will it cause zombie eyes and a marked drop in IQ?		
OFFENSIVE	Does it include rude or inappropriate content about different types of people?		
CONFUSING	Will kids struggle to follow along?		
DANGEROUS	Could kids get hurt by following your example? Do you remind kids what's not OK to try at home?		
BORING	Will kids prefer cleaning their rooms to watching it?		
JUNKY	Is the quality so poor it's hard to see and hear?		
OVER-STIMULATING	Will it give kids and families a headache?		
BIASED	Are your characters stereotypes? Will it be difficult for your viewers to relate to them? Is there a lack of diversity?		

## Some Important Reminders



### Do not ask children to:

- Watch shows that may not be age-appropriate.
- Share personal information.
- Keep secrets from parents.
- Visit social media.
- Communicate with strangers.
- Buy things.



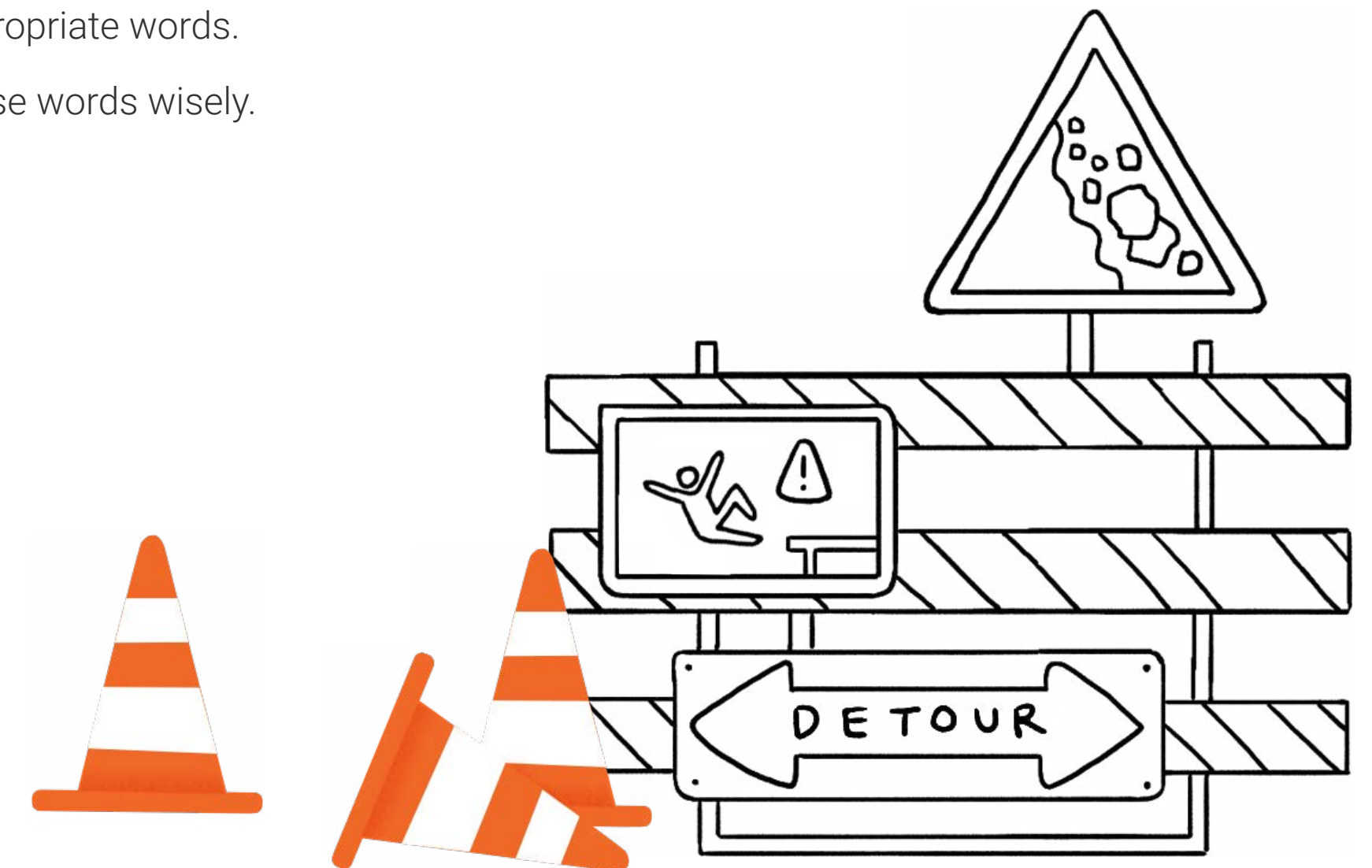
### Support safety:

- Model positive ways to resolve conflicts.
- Be an anti-bully – don't celebrate bullying behaviour.
- Be thoughtful if you include fight scenes.
- Viewers like to mimic what they see.



### Choose words wisely:

- Avoid language that is not welcome in kids' homes and schools.
- Use language that is appropriate across cultures.
- Use creative, silly words – not mean or inappropriate words.
- Choose words wisely.







# Worksheet C

## Story

### Directions

Are you developing an engaging story? Use the checklist to identify key points. Then, sketch and label your own story arc.

*My Story Arc:*

HANDY STORY ARC CHECKLIST	
MY STORY IS ABOUT (character)	
WHO REALLY WANTS (desire)	
AND/OR IS REALLY AFRAID OF (fear)	
BUT HAS TO OVERCOME (obstacle)	
AND OVERCOME (obstacle)	
AND OVERCOME (obstacle)	
UNTIL, FINALLY (resolution)	



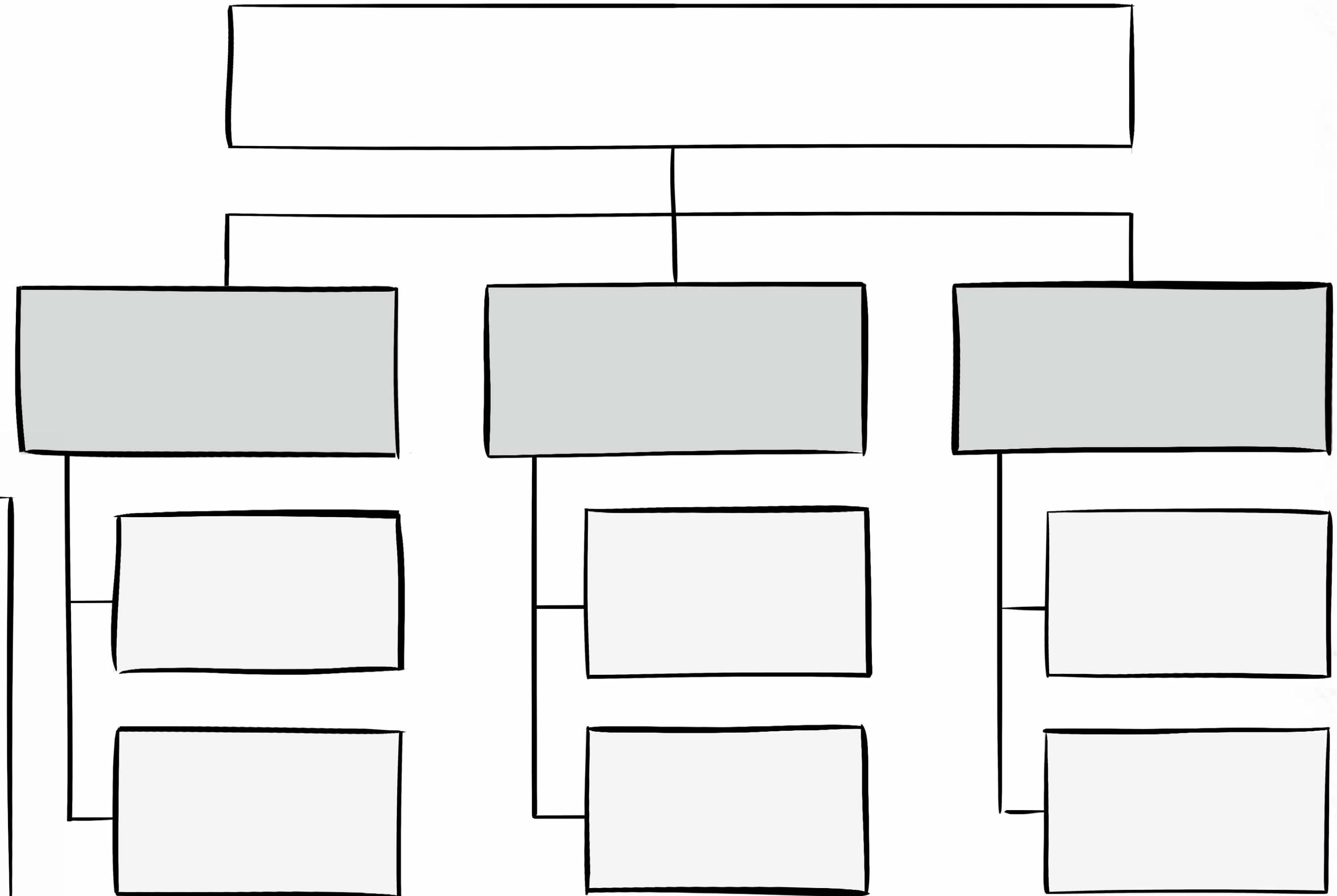
# Worksheet D

## Goals

### Directions

WHY are you making this family-friendly show? Use the box below to articulate your BIG GOAL. Then, fill in the goal map to work out how best to support it.

*My Big Goal:*





# Worksheet E

## Research

### Directions

Imagine your viewers asking you these questions. Jot down your answers to investigate how you can dig deeper to deliver the best content.



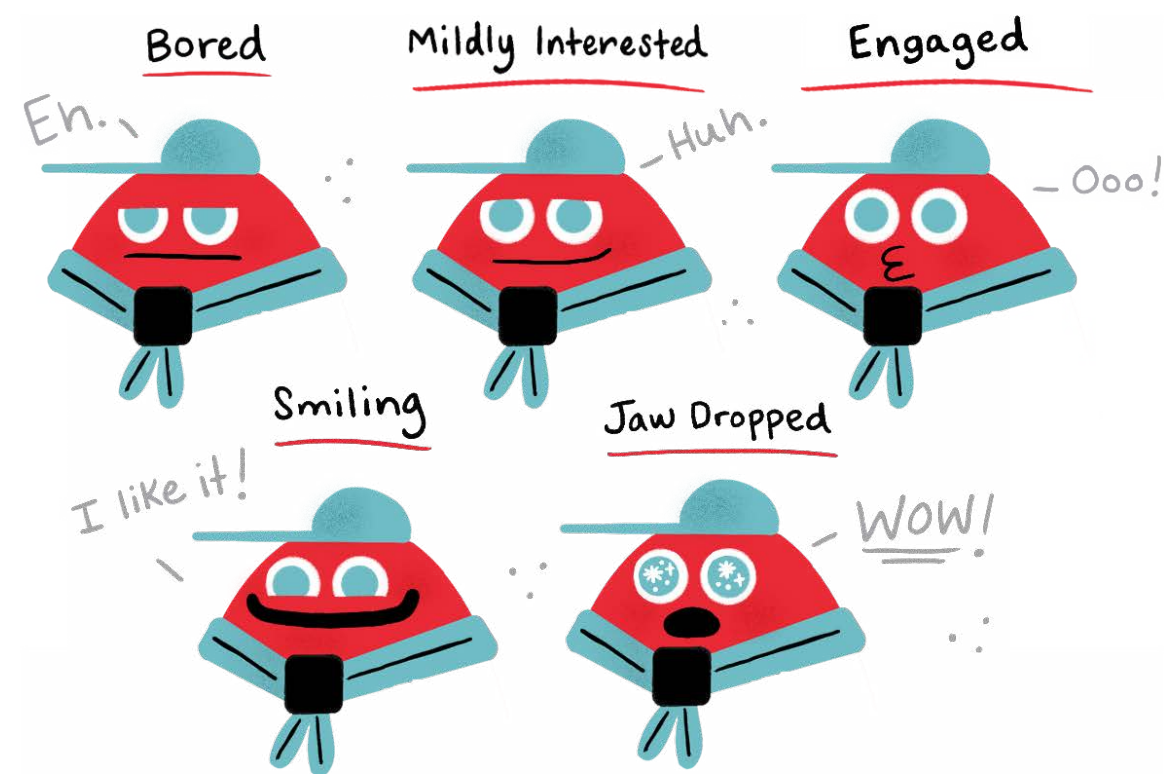


# Worksheet F

## Reviews

### Directions

Design your own viewer check-ins. Use the sample questions or create your own. Try testing your material with kids and families at different points in your development cycle. Adjust questions as needed to get the most out of each session.



SAMPLE QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
What do you think the show is about?	
Did you think there were funny parts? What was the funniest part?	
Do you want to watch it again? Why/why not? When? Where?	
Do you want to show it to any of your friends? Why? When? Who?	
Did anything make you feel upset? What?	
Who was your favourite character? Why?	
Do you think kids will feel scared by anything you watched? What part? Why?	
Was anything confusing? Do you have any ideas to make it more clear?	
If you were in charge of making this show, what would you change? Why?	





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