



The InvestiGator Club™ Prekindergarten Learning System

Investigations

TEACHERS
EDITION

Integrated Activities for Exploring, Experimenting,
and Making Discoveries



Marvelous Me!



THE EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPANY
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Part 4

My Family and Friends

Tell children: *Now that you have been investigating ways you take care of your body so you can grow strong and stay healthy, it's time to learn about another very important part of our lives. During this Investigation, we will learn just how special our family and friends are and how great it is to have one another. If you're ready, let's start investigating!*

Social Studies/Art/ Mathematics/Oral Language

Children recognize how unique each family is by creating their own family tree.

Materials

- [Family Tree Activity Sheet](#) for each child
- small circular sponges (or stickers)
- red tempera paint
- paint trays
- crayons or markers
- tape recorder and tape

ELL

Say the names of family members for the child to repeat as you record your voices. The child can listen to the recording to practice saying the words again.

Note: Families come in all sizes and configurations. Be sensitive to and supportive of children during this activity.

My Family Tree

Tell children: *Some of the members of Dilly's family tree include her mother, father, little brother JT, and Great Auntie Lu. Each one is very important to Dilly. The members of your family are special too!*

Explain to children that they will make a family tree to show the members of their families. Demonstrate how the tree will be made by creating Dilly's family tree on a copy of the [My Family Tree Activity Sheet](#), a small round sponge, and red tempera paint. (Using stickers is another option.)

Display a copy of the activity sheet on an easel. Say: *Let's name the members of Dilly's family together: mother, father, Dilly, JT, and Great Auntie Lu. I will use the sponge to stamp one shape for each member.*

Insert the sponge into the red tempera paint and make a print in the branches (as if apples on a tree) as children name each family member again.

Then use a marker to record each family member's name. Say: *This is Dilly's family tree. Let's count her members: one, two, three, four, five. Now who's ready to make their own family tree?*

Give a copy of the [My Family Tree Activity Sheet](#) to each child. Provide round sponges and red tempera paint (or stickers). If using paint, cover the entire work area with newspaper or plastic to catch spills.

You might want to work with small groups of children or enlist the help of other adults to guide children as they name each family member they want to include. They also can add pets if they would like.

Once the family trees are made, engage the group in other activities while you interview one child at a time. Ask each child to show you his or her family tree. Tape the interview for later use.

My Family Tree (continued)

Begin the interview with: *This is (Mari's) family tree. Count the members your family has. Can you name them for me?* Label the tree as the child dictates. Children can listen to the recording of their family tree interviews at a later time as they examine one another's family trees.

Dramatic Play/Social and Emotional/Health

Children realize that they aren't babies anymore as they investigate how babies move, communicate, eat, and play.

Materials

- variety of baby items or catalog pictures of them (clothing, bib, pacifier, bottle, diaper, toys, spoon, baby food, baby blanket, etc.)
- tray
- pictures of babies
- tape recorded baby cries
- tape recorder
- baby dolls and nursery items
- children's baby photographs

Baby Talk

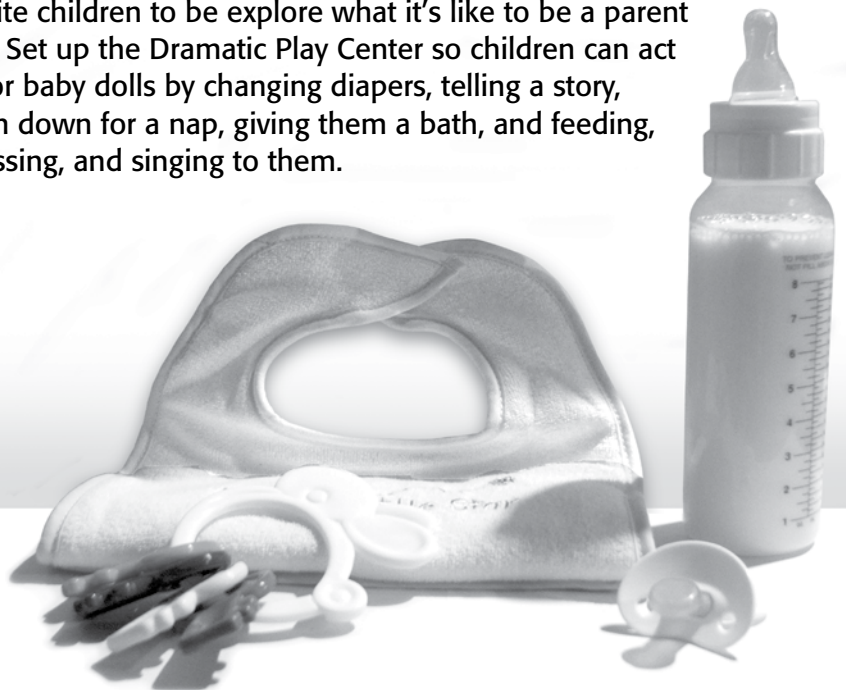
Beforehand post pictures of babies around the classroom. Near one of the pictures, hide a tape recorder with a recording of a baby crying. Begin by asking: *Who has had a baby recently born in their family? Was the baby a boy or girl? What is the baby's name?* Explain that children will do some investigating about babies.

Place a collection of six baby items on a tray. Show each item, and have children explain the use. Ask questions: *What is something a baby wears? Which one is a toy for a baby? What is used to feed a baby? What will keep a baby warm?*

Play a game with the items. Have children close their eyes while you remove and hide one of the items. When children open their eyes, ask what is missing. Talk about ways babies move, play, and communicate. Ask: *What are things you can do that babies cannot do?*

Explain that one way babies communicate is by crying. Babies might cry to tell the people around them that they need something. Ask: *Why do you think a baby might cry?* While you have children's attention, ask an aide or parent volunteer to discretely turn on the tape recording of a baby crying. Have children listen and point out all the babies pictured in the room. Say: *Listen. One baby is crying. Who can find the baby who is crying?*

Tell children that the members of the InvestiGator Club like to pretend. Invite children to explore what it's like to be a parent with a baby. Set up the Dramatic Play Center so children can act out caring for baby dolls by changing diapers, telling a story, putting them down for a nap, giving them a bath, and feeding, rocking, dressing, and singing to them.



**Social and Emotional/Oral
Language/Music/Fine
Motor Skills**

Children investigate emotions by playing a game, singing a song, and illustrating a response.

Materials

- large box covered with paper
- magazine or simple line drawings showing six feelings: *happy, sad, sleepy, mad, scared, surprised*
- How Do I Feel? Activity Sheet for each child
- crayons or markers

How Do I Feel?

Beforehand cover a large box with paper. Attach a picture on each side that shows a range of feelings: happy, sad, sleepy, mad, scared, surprised.

Introduce the pictures on the box by showing each one and identifying the feeling that is pictured. Tell children: *JT Gator taught the other members of the InvestiGator Club a song about feelings. Now it's your turn to learn the song! Are you ready to sing?*

Sing the following song to the tune of the chorus of "Jingle Bells." As each feeling is named in the song, show the picture on the box.

Sing this song of feelings

You have every day.

Not everyone feels the same.

The way you feel's okay.

If you're happy give a smile.

Frown if you are sad.

If you're sleepy, rest awhile.

Cool down if you're mad.

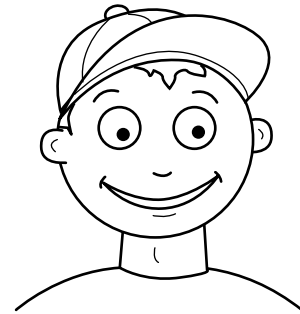
If you're scared, don't shiver and shake.

Find something else to do.

If you're surprised with a special treat

Remember to say, "Thank you!"

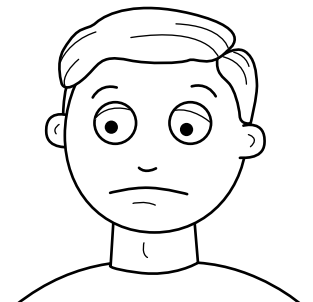
(Repeat first verse.)



Play a game with the feelings cube. Invite children to take turns tossing the box. Identify the feeling shown on the top panel. Have all children imitate the facial expression and name reasons why they might feel this way.

Give each child a copy of the How Do I Feel? Activity Sheet. Tell children to write their names at the top of the page. Then read each caption: *I am happy. I am sad.* Have children draw pictures of themselves looking happy and sad.

Encourage children to share their pictures with a partner and talk about things that make them happy and sad and things they do to make others feel happy and sad. Have children take home the activity sheet to share with family members.



People Match-Up

Children play a matching game that focuses on the dynamics of a family.

Materials

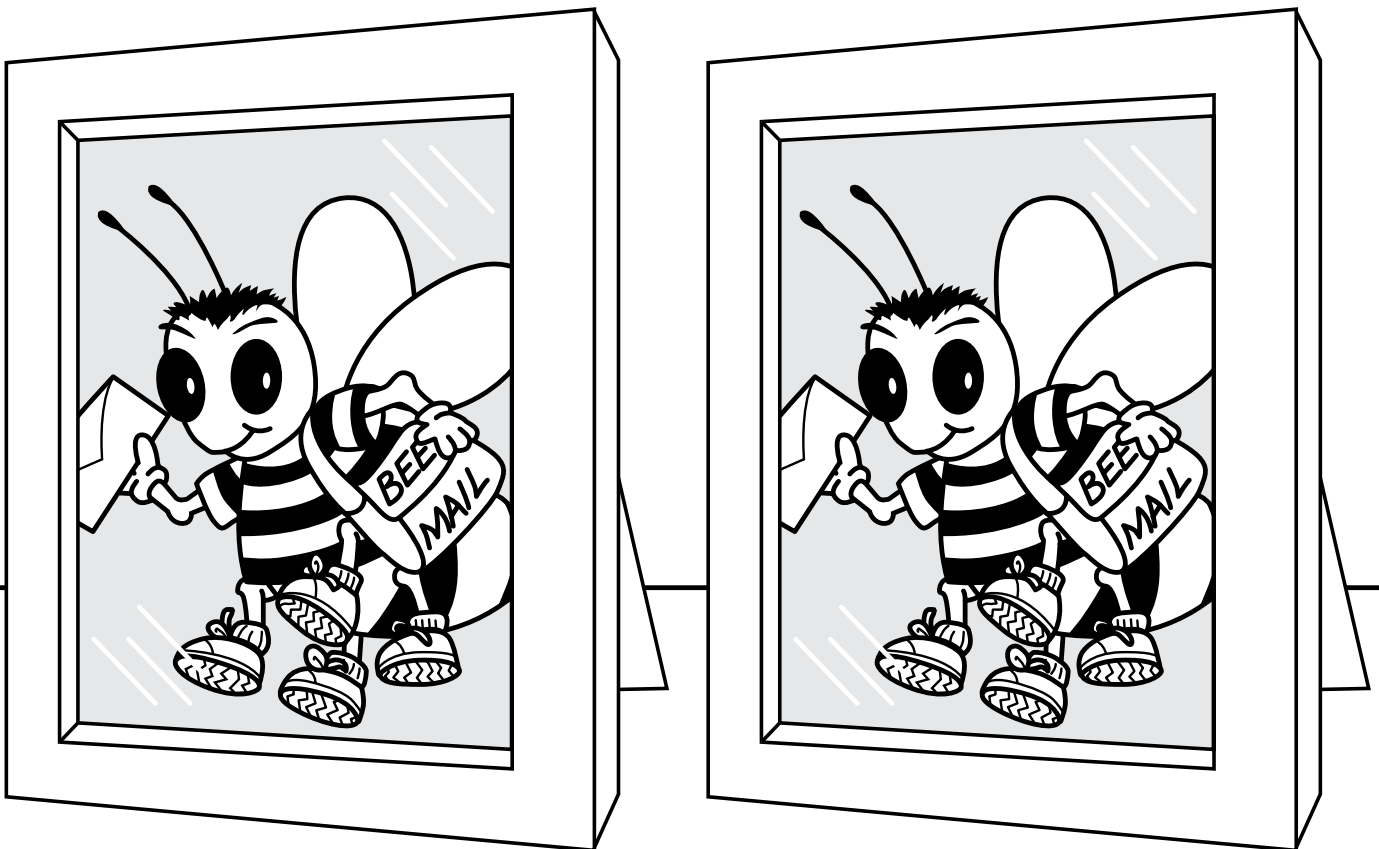
- two copies of the same magazine issue that features photographs of people
- construction paper

Beforehand create a matching game using photographs of people from two copies of the same magazine issue. Find identical pictures of people that represent different ages, including babies, girls, boys, adult females and males, and senior females and males. Mount each picture on construction paper.

Talk with children about the dynamics of a family and the people who might make up a family. Include babies, children, parents, grandparents, and others. Consider the various backgrounds of your children to include all types of families.

Show one set of photographs that have been mounted. As you show each photo, comment: *This shows an older woman. Could she be someone's grandmother? This shows a young boy. He might be a brother to someone.*

Tell children they are going to play a people matching game with the pictures. Mix both sets of photographs together. Give each child one photograph. At your signal, children are to walk around the room to find a photograph that looks exactly like theirs. When a match has been made, check the matches, asking whom the family member might be.



All Around the Block

Children describe the neighborhoods where they live and use blocks to build a miniature neighborhood in the classroom.

Materials

- construction-paper houses
- magazines for children to cut apart
- scissors
- tape
- variety of blocks

If possible, take children on a walk around the block where the school is located. Explain beforehand: *We are going to take a walk around the block to take a look at the neighborhood. "Around the block" means to go up and down the streets that surround an area. We will start and finish in the same place—our home!* As you walk, ask children to point out what they see in the neighborhood. If your school is not in an area conducive to doing this, begin by talking about the neighborhoods where children live.

Say: Dilly and her brother, JT, live on Triangle Beach. Their house is near the water. Great Auntie Lu has her art studio on Triangle Beach too. Rosalita Sausalita and Manny Salamander live in a different neighborhood. They both live in City Square.



Beforehand cut house shapes from construction paper and write each child's address on a shape. Tell children you will say each address. Have children stand when they hear theirs called. Invite each child to tell something about the place where they live. Display all the houses. Discover how many children live in houses or apartments and how many live in the same neighborhood or town.

Invite small groups of children to work together to build mini neighborhoods. First have children create families by cutting and taping small magazine pictures of people onto blocks. Then have them use additional blocks to build homes for their families to create a neighborhood. Remind children to work cooperatively to create a neighborhood. Then provide plenty of time for children to role-play showing their block families doing daily activities.



Children learn the shape and sound of the letter Hh as they investigate things in a home.

Materials

- chart paper
- letter models for Hh (1 per child)
- crayons and markers
- modeling clay (optional)
- *H Is for Home Activity Sheet* for each child

H Is for Home

Remind children: *A home is a special place where someone lives. Dilly and JT's home is a houseboat on Triangle Beach. Rosalita Sausalita and Manny Salamander live in Miss Lilly's Pads apartment building in City Square. Chuck Wood lives in Diggery Den and Bruno Buzzbee lives in a hive; both are in Circle Forest.*

Say the word *home*. Ask children to repeat the word. Say it slowly, emphasizing the beginning sound: /h/-ome. Ask: *What sound do you hear at the beginning of home? Say: The word home begins with the letter Hh.* Use a pencil to write the letter Hh on paper. Trace each letter with your finger as you say the letter name and make the sound /h/. Have children repeat after you.

Give each child a copy of the letter models for Hh. Demonstrate how the letter is formed as children use a finger to trace each letter. Then have them trace with crayon. Encourage children to try writing the letter.

You also might want to provide modeling clay for children to form the letter Hh. Teach the following finger rhyme about homes.

This is my house (Place hands upright with
Where I sleep, live, and eat. fingertips touching to form a roof.)
This is my friend's house, (Repeat the gesture.)
Just down the street. (Point away from you.)

On sunny days (Form a big circle with your arms.)
I open my door wide (Pantomime opening a door.)
I quickly run (Pointer and middle finger running.)
to play outside.

I look down the street. (Shield eyes to look away.)
My friend's coming too! (Wave.)
We run to meet each other, (Two fingers on each hand running
to meet.)
And shout, "Happy to see you!" (Throw hands up into the air and
point to one another.)



Explain that everyone's home is special. No two homes are exactly alike. Make copies of the *H Is for Home Activity Sheet*. Read each caption inside the home: *family room, kitchen, my bedroom, my bathroom*. Tell children to take the sheet home and draw or cut and paste a magazine picture of something found in each room. Send a note home asking family members to help children fill out the chart and return it to school in one or two days.

Social and Emotional/Oral Language/Movement

Children learn about giving a compliment through this fun activity.

Materials

- large ball of yarn

For 3-year-olds

In place of yarn, have children roll a ball to one another. Start out by having them just say one another's names. Gradually move on to compliments as the year progresses.

Cooperation/Fine Motor Skills/Music

Children develop cooperative behavior through an activity that involves music and sharing of space and art materials.

Materials

- butcher paper
- crayons
- recorded music with quick and slow tempos

Friendship Web

Tell children: *Dilly Gator and Rosalita Sausalita are best friends. Dilly would say that Rosalita is a great dancer, a computer whiz, and a cool friend. Rosalita would say that Dilly is smart, funny, a good reader, and great at solving problems. When you say something nice about another person, you are giving a compliment*

Ask children to sit on the floor in a large circle. Explain that they will play a game using nice words and a ball of yarn. Each child will have a chance to roll the ball of yarn to someone across the circle and say something nice about that person.

To demonstrate, hold onto the end of the yarn and roll the ball to a child seated across from you. Pay this child a compliment: *Mike, I like the red shirt you chose to wear today.* Then this child holds a section of yarn, rolls the ball across to another child, and pays that child a compliment.

Continue the process until each child has had a turn. Then say: *Look at the friendship web we created by saying nice things about one another. When we say kind words, we become closer to one another like friends should be.*

Sharing Spaces

Say: *When Bruno Buzzbee bakes a honey cake, he always shares it with the rest of the InvestiGator Club. Chuck Wood shares his tools, and Great Auntie Lu shares her art supplies with anyone who wants to paint a picture.* Ask your child to name some things he or she shares with a sibling or friend. Say: *We share lots of things in our home, like space, the TV, toys, and food.*

Engage children in an activity that has them sharing crayons and space.

Roll out a length of butcher paper. If your class is very large, you might want to use more than one length in different areas of the room, or do the activity with small groups.

Draw lines to mark off sections. Assign two children to each section and have them sit across from one another on the floor. Place a variety of crayons in each section for children to share.

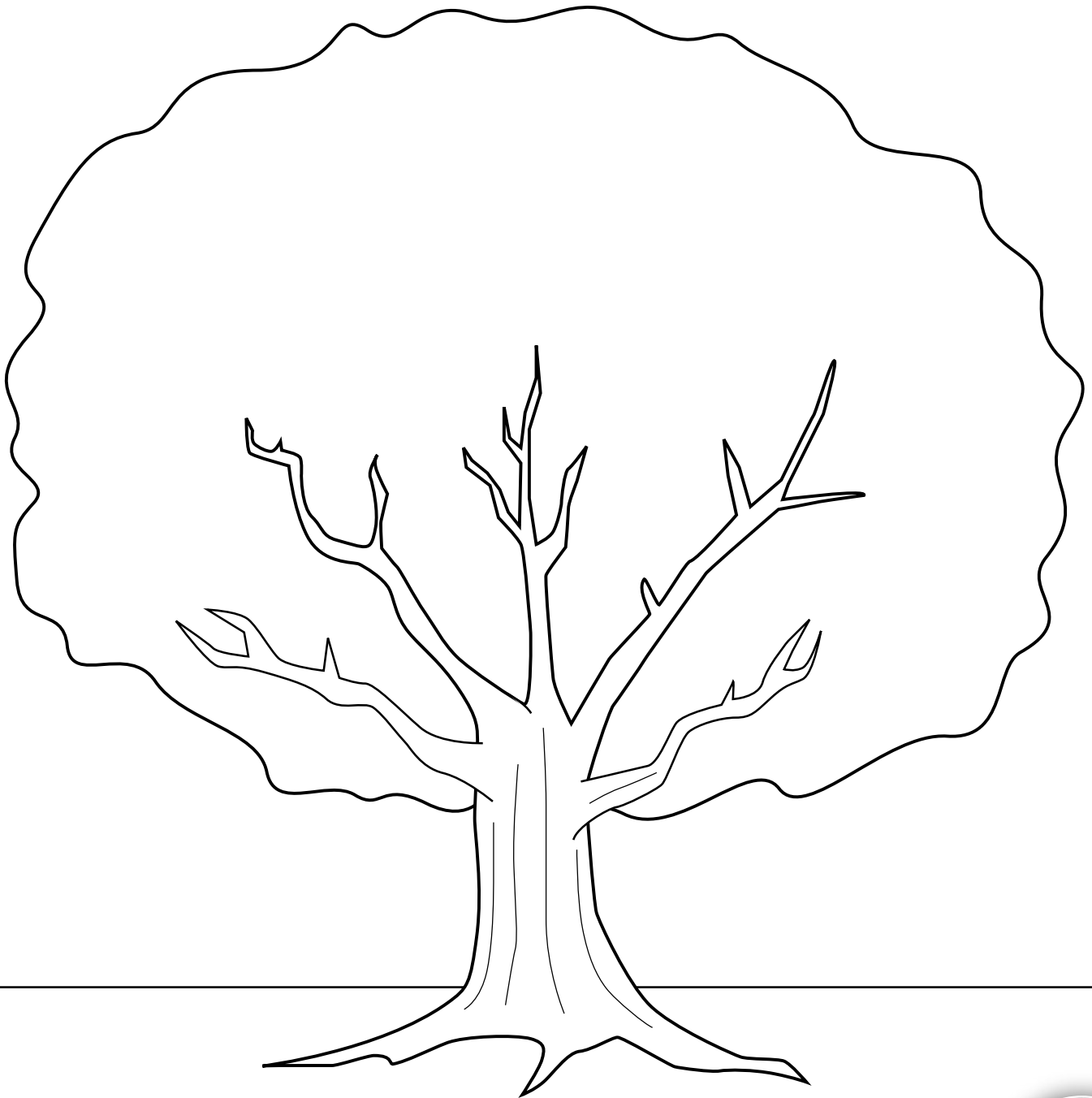
As you play recorded music, tell children to feel the music as they draw large shapes on the paper. Begin with a slow tempo and then increase to a faster tempo. Children can change crayons at any time.

Remind children: *You are sharing the space and sharing the crayons.* Observe children as they work together. Following the activity, ask: *What have you created by working together? How did sharing space and crayons work for you?*

Name _____

My Family Tree

Stamp a print for each family member.
Write the name for each one.



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Name _____

How Do I Feel?

Draw pictures to show how you look when you feel happy and sad.

I am happy.	I am sad.

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Name _____

H Is for Home

Draw or cut and paste a picture to show something in each room of your home.



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