



OCTOBO

Play Guide



About Thinker-Tinker

Designed by mom, for families. Octobo is created by Thinker-Tinker, a team of passionate designers and parents in Los Angeles, California. Octobo and the Octobo App is more than just a toy. This educational companion provides a new digital play platform that turns sedentary screen time into meaningful play time.

Using new technology, this learning companion introduces **more than 10 ways to play and learn** with interactive story books and tokens, to promote fundamental skills in children ages 0-7.

“As a Master of Education from Harvard Graduate School of Education, a teacher, and a researcher focusing on childhood development, I believe Octobo can be a powerful socio-emotional, STEM, and literacy learning tool for young children. The customization and expansion features of Octobo make it unique and accessible for children of varying developmental stages. It’s so inspiring to see a toy that uses technology to stimulate positive interactions, emotional awareness, and most importantly, play amongst our youngest learners.” - **Jessica Livornese, Ed.M., Harvard Graduate School of Education**

With the help of Jessica Livornese, we’ve devised additional ways to play with Octobo. Through play, young learners build confidence, social and language skills, and problem-solving techniques.

Use the hashtag **#PlayOctobo** to share your findings - you may be featured!

For more ways to get the most out of playtime, visit our social media pages below, and always feel free to contact help@playoctobo.com!

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/playoctobo/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/playoctobo/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/playoctobo>



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How Octobo Works



As your child grows and their needs and interests change, you can download new content and features from our **growing app library** through the App Store or Google Play Store.

- A.** Octobo is stuffed with interactive **sensors** that allow him to respond appropriately to your child's actions, like squeezing, tossing, poking, and hugging.
- B.** Fun **LED lights** above Octobo's eye show his status and help him express emotions.
- C.** **Bluetooth** technology allows you to connect Octobo to your iOS or Android tablet.
- D.** Children can place Octobo's interactive tokens in his **bowl** and see how he reacts! Different tokens come with each story book.
- E.** Press the **star button** to go back to the Start screen.

Setting Up Octobo

1. Connect your tablet to Octobo via Bluetooth
2. Sign in on your account and choose your activity
3. Insert the tablet to Octobo
4. Let's play!

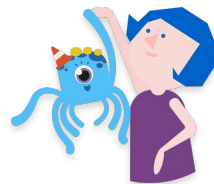


Developmental Benefits of Octobo



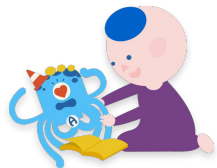
0-12 mo

Infants primarily learn about their world through sensory experiences. Octobo's cuddly body and squishy arms welcome our little ones to explore and grab, helping them improve their fine- and gross-motor control.



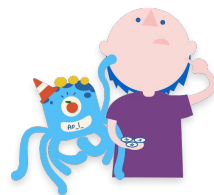
1-2 yrs

Children can learn about emotions by observing Octobo's reactions to different interactions with him, such as poking Octobo's eye or wiggling his arms. *Octobo's Underwater Adventure* storybook and app supports early cognitive learning through developmentally appropriate tasks and puzzles.



3-5 yrs

Our ABCs storybook, *Octobo and the Great Letter Search*, and its accompanying app is designed by educational experts and experienced game designers. Kids can learn everything from letters to spelling in a fun and engaging way, all while further improving their emotional recognition and prosocial behaviors.



5-7 yrs

After kids master letter recognition and basic vocabulary, it's time for some spelling challenges! In our spelling game mode, kids can play collaborative spelling games with others and see how many words they can spell out.



Creative Confidence

Octobo allows children to experiment with decision-making, helping them develop into more creative and confident individuals.



Joint Attention

Octobo encourages joint attention - or shared attention on an object/task - between parents and children, which is vital for social and language development.



Self-Directed Play

Octobo encourages children to explore and create their own ways to play, encouraging growing independence and innovative problem-solving skills.

Look for these icons throughout the guide to see the developmental benefits of each activity!

How to Use this Play Guide

Our play guide provides developmentally appropriate activities and discussions for you to help your child get the most out of this experience.

The ability to **understand emotions** and empathize with others is essential for children to demonstrate positive social skills and make responsible decisions for themselves and others. Octobo's ability to react to physical actions - from a hug to a poke - help support your child's ability to understand emotions. **The yellow icon** indicates **social-emotional learning** activities.

Learning through play is proven to be one of the most effective learning methods for young children, and Octobo's stories, games, and adventures allow your child to do just that! Look for **the blue icon** for hands-on activities involving shapes, patterns, colors, and letters that support your child's **cognitive development**.

Active movement is shown to have positive impacts on learning and achievement. Octobo's app library features many activities which nurture your child's active energy, and his built-in sensors and mini-activities give your child experiences that build their **gross-motor** and **body control skills**. **The green icon** represents games that promote **active play**.

Octobo's interactive tokens support your child's learning through **game-based activities**. The guide includes quick token-based game suggestions which help your child build many skills simultaneously, such as critical thinking, spelling, and hand-eye coordination. Find **the red icon** for **extended play** activities.



Social-Emotional Learning



Brain Exercises



Active Play



Extended Play

Look for these icons and color banners throughout the guide to see which skills each activity can improve!

Universal Activities

Universal Activities

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B. Diving Deeper: Octobo's Emotions and Me	
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What are Emotions?

When your child pokes Octobo's eyes and mouth, wiggles him, shakes his arms, and hugs him, Octobo will show how he is feeling! This gives you an opportunity to guide your child in **identifying and exploring the causes of emotions** in the efforts to **help them manage and understand their own**.

When Octobo or other characters express emotion, you can:

0-12 mo

Mimic and label Octobo's emotions so your child can begin to distinguish between them and label your infant's emotions:

"I can see you're crying; you must be feeling upset," or, "I can see you smiling; you seem to be feeling happy!"

1-2 yrs

Continue to label your child's emotions and explain Octobo's emotions to your child:

"Octobo is feeling _____ because _____," or, "I can tell Octobo is feeling _____ because... (he is smiling/frowning/ crying, his hands are in fists, etc...)"

3-5 yrs

Prompt your child to label different emotions. (Octobo's and their own!)

"How do you think Octobo is feeling? How do you know?" or, "What do you do to show when you're feeling (happy/sad/angry)?"

5-7 yrs

Have your child talk about their own emotions and ways to respond to the emotions of others:

"How is Octobo feeling right now? When was the last time you felt that way?" or, "How could you help Octobo feel better/keep feeling happy?"



Diving Deeper: Octobo's Emotions and Me

(Ideal for: All ages)

Octobo can help your child further develop their **emotional intelligence**, or, their ability to monitor their own emotions in order to guide their thinking and behaviors. Emotional intelligence helps your child to better manage their emotions and behaviors, and to identify others' emotions as they grow.

How YOU can help your child...

Identify and Label Emotions

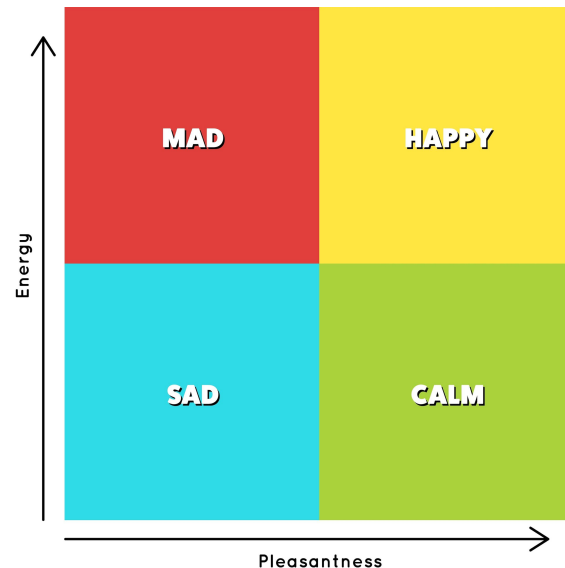
- **Model** (using facial and body expressions) **and name different feelings** (happy/angry/sad), then **ask your child to mimic you!**
- As your child masters these more basic emotions, **introduce more complex emotions** (ex: excitement, nervousness, pride, jealousy)
- **Use a basic emotion valence chart** (like the one pictured to the right and on [slide 27!](#)) around your home. As your child grows, add more complex emotion labels to the chart. Have your child place a sticker on how they feel throughout the day.

Comprehend Emotions

- **Ask your child**, "What happened that made you feel (happy/angry/sad)? How did your body feel?"

Express Emotions

- **Ask your child**, "What do you do when you are feeling (happy/angry/sad/frustrated)?"



Diving Deeper: Octobo's Emotions and Me

(Ideal for: Ages 2+)

How YOU can help your child...

Regulate Emotions

Give your child some strategies for regulating negative emotions:

- Take deep belly breaths
(put your hands on your belly and feel it fill up with air as you breathe in and out)
- Talk to a friend, parent, teacher, or other adult about how you are feeling
- Use private self-talk ("I know I can do this!" "I won't feel sad forever.")
- Take a break (take a short walk, find a calm place to go to)
- Give yourself a hug
- Draw a picture
- Act it out

Give your child some strategies for maintaining positive emotions:

- Share a smile with their friends
- Jump and clap to show their happiness
- Use private self-talk ("I love how I am feeling!")

Be sure to practice these strategies together with your child!



Bedtime Routines

(Ideal for: All ages)

Octobo can help your child throughout their bedtime routine! Bedtime can sometimes be challenging for our little ones. Having a **consistent routine** where **your child feels they play a role in their own nighttime activities** can transform bedtime into an enjoyable experience for both parent and child!

How YOU can help your child:

- Have your child **draw a picture of their bedtime routine with Octobo**
- Create a **“bedtime visual schedule”** for their bedtime routine. Allow your child to move pictures from the “To Do” column to the “Done” column as they get ready for bed!
- Help your child wind down for bedtime by **dimming the lights, using a calm voice, and reading a story to them**. Allowing them to comfort themselves by **hugging Octobo** is a great way to bring their energy down and get them ready for sleep



Beyond the Story: Do It Yourself

(Ideal for: Ages 2+)

There is so much more you can do with Octobo! Encouraging your child to play with their plush in a variety of ways is a great way to foster creativity, innovation, and problem-solving skills.

Do it Yourself:

Have your child **dress Octobo up with household items**. Create a blanket for Octobo using felt or a napkin, a hat using a plastic cup, or a magic wand using a pipe cleaner or stick from outside. The possibilities are endless!

Let's Play:

Engage in dramatic pretend play with your child and Octobo. Act out real life or imaginary scenarios to give your child a safe place to practice various prosocial and problem-solving skills, increase their vocabulary, and gives them a safe way to express challenging feelings. **Provide your child with real objects** like plates, cups, and empty food boxes that they can incorporate into their play.



Social-Emotional
Learning



Brain
Exercises



Octobo's Underwater Adventure

Octobo's Underwater Adventure Activities

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Shape Detective

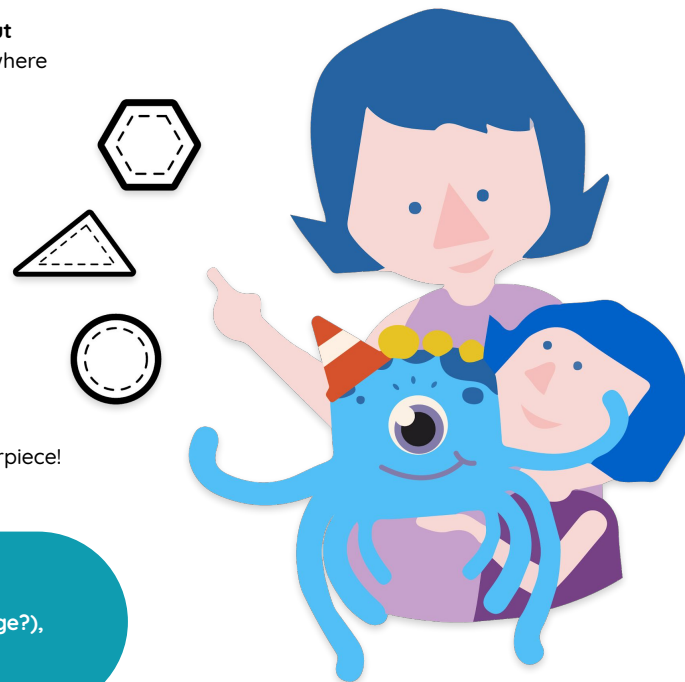
(Ideal for: Ages 2+)

While reading *Octobo's Underwater Adventure*, encourage **exploration** with your child. **Have them point out different shapes** they see. Talk about the difference between a side (a straight line) and a corner (a place where two lines meet). After you finish the book, it's time to hunt!

Let's go on a scavenger hunt! Pick a shape and start the search. Be sure to **take Octobo with you!** As they hunt around their surroundings, talk about **what makes each shape unique** (number of sides, size of each side, number of corners/angles, what makes a square a square?). Let your child **take pictures of the shapes**, label the photos, and assemble them into a shape book, or simply collect and sort different shaped items! Try asking: *What is your favorite shape?*

As your child masters basic shapes (circles, triangles, rectangles, squares), **incorporate more complex shapes** (diamonds, ovals, hexagons, etc...) or **patterns** (using Octobo's fish tokens) into your hunt!

*For younger children (6-18 months), let your child use stamps with different shapes to make a shape masterpiece!



Here's a tip!

Scavenger hunts can happen anywhere, anytime - while driving, eating lunch (what shape is an orange?), straightening up, at a party, sitting in a chair, even while shopping!



Brain
Exercises



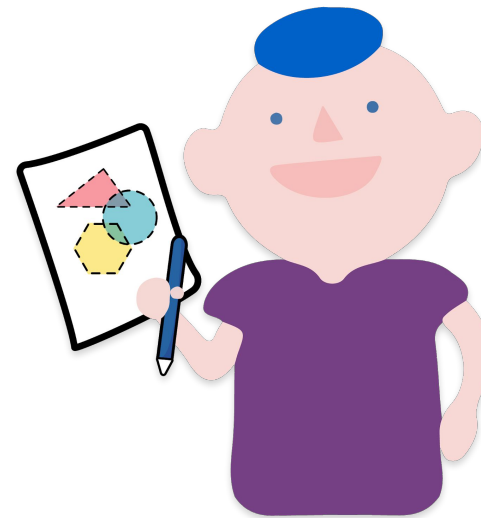
Color Scientists

(Ideal for: Ages 1+)

While reading *Octobo's Underwater Adventure*, have your child to name the different colors they see. As they name these colors, have them look around the room for items of the same color.

Allow your child to *experiment with mixing different colored markers, paints, clay, or Play-Doh*. Encourage your child to **make predictions about what will happen when you mix two colors**. Start out by having your child combine two primary colors (red, yellow, blue), then allow them to explore mixing secondary colors (orange, green, purple). See what happens when you add white or black to a color.

Allow your child to **layer different color tissue papers and hold it up to a light source**. Ask them to predict what they think we happen when they layer different colors.



Here's a tip!

Colors are all around us! What colors do you most often see outside your home? What about inside? Encourage your child to think about their surroundings and ask "WHY?" ("Why is the sky blue?" "Why is grass green?")



Brain
Exercises



Sight Word Memory and Bingo

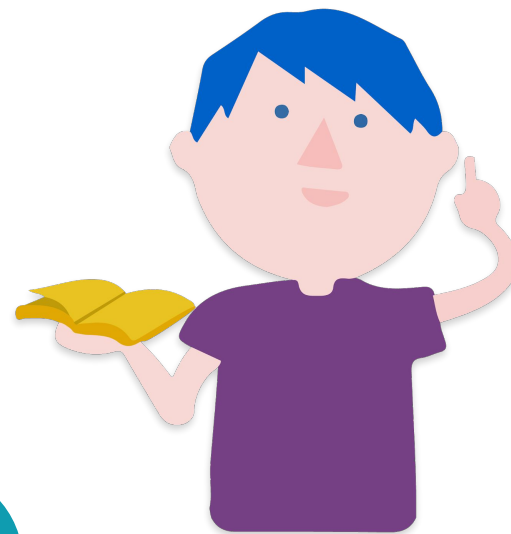
(Ideal for: Ages 4+)

There are lots of sight words in *Octobo's Underwater Adventure*. Write each word on two index cards or post-it notes, and **play a game of sight word memory**. Place all the cards face-down on the floor, and **take turns flipping over two cards. If you find a match, you get to keep both cards!** If not, it's the next player's turn. Whoever has the most words when all the matches have been found wins!

For younger children, try playing sight word bingo with your child! Build a bingo board using simple sight words, and have your child use Octobo's tokens to cover each word they encounter as you read through *Octobo's Underwater Adventure*.

Find example sight word bingo cards and a make-your-own bingo card on [slides 28-30!](#)

Find example sight word memory cards on [slides 31-34!](#)



Here's a tip!

Pose comprehension questions about the story and your child's choices as they read and interact with Octobo: "What made you put that token?" "What did Octobo ask for?" "What is Octobo trying to do?"



Octobo and the Great Letter Search

Octobo and the Great Letter Search Activities

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Letter Constructors

Work with your child to **build different letters using sticks/small branches** from outside. Gather a collection of **big straight lines, little straight lines, big curves, and little curves**. Pick one of Octobo's letter tokens and **ask your child what kinds of lines and/or curves make up that letter**. Then, encourage your child to **build the letter using sticks/small branches**. **Talk about the sounds that each letter makes**.

As your child masters these skills, increase the challenge by asking them to build short *consonant-vowel-consonant* words such as “dog,” “cat,” or “hot.”

Try having them spell their name or other sight words such as “the,” “and,” “go,” or “play.”



Spelling & Vocabulary Activities

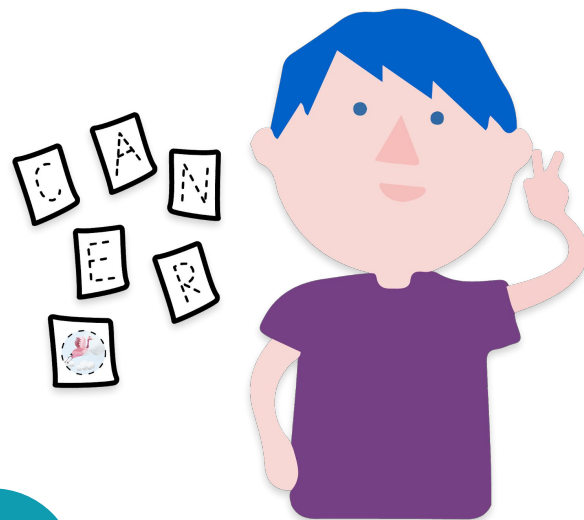
(Ideal for: Ages 5+)

Spelling Splitz

After reading *Octobo and the Great Letter Search*, write out a word from the story on a strip of paper. Then, cut up the word, letter by letter, and ask your child to rebuild the word! Pull up a picture of the word they are rebuilding on your phone/tablet. Have your child say the sound that each letter makes as they rebuild the word. You can also have your child practice their handwriting and fine-motor control by writing out the word and cutting the letters out!

Examples of words:

Apple	Honk	Sheep
Ants	Jump	Show
Boat	Owl	Tree
Crane	Panda	Tent
Clap	Rabbit	Wave
Fish	Soft	Zebra



Here's a tip:

As you read *Octobo and the Great Letter Search*, define words that your child may not be familiar with. For words that your child is already familiar with, ask them to “describe it in your own words.”



Mini-Games

(Ideal for: Ages 1+)

Octobo and the Great Letter Adventure features lots of mini-games which offer several developmental benefits for your child!

Read more about them and the benefits of each game:



Clap for Crane

When you place the “C” token in Octobo’s bowl, clap your hands to help the crane fly away!

Benefits:

- Promotes *physical activity*
- Promotes *active engagement* with Octobo



Fish Game

When you place the “F” token in Octobo’s bowl, pat Octobo’s head each time you see a fish!

Benefits:

- Teaches *1:1 correspondence*
- Improves *hand-eye coordination*
- Requires *gross-motor control*
- Teaches *counting*



Jumping Game

When you place the “J” token in Octobo’s bowl, jump around with Octobo!

Benefits:

- Promotes *physical activity*
- Allows child to *expend active energy*



Key to Celebration

When you place the “K” token in Octobo’s bowl, Octobo will sing a song that your child can dance to!

Benefits:

- Requires *focus*
- Improves *rhythm*
- Promotes *physical activity*
- Improves *balance & coordination*



Social-Emotional
Learning



Brain
Exercises



Active
Play



Mini-Games

(Ideal for: Ages 1+)

Octobo and the Great Letter Adventure features lots of mini-games which offer several developmental benefits for your child!

Read more about them and the benefits of each game:

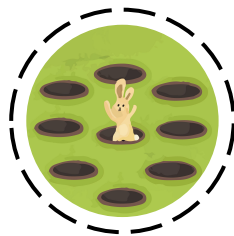


Lion Game

When you place the “L” token in Octobo’s bowl, it’s time to cheer and clap for the lion!

Benefits:

- Teaches *voice/volume control*
- Promotes *emotional awareness*
- Encourages *prosocial behaviors*

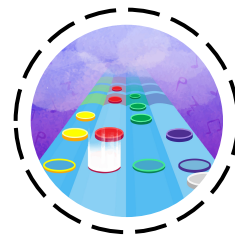


Whack-a-Rabbit

When you place the “R” token in Octobo’s bowl, it’s time to catch the rabbit!

Benefits:

- Improves *hand-eye coordination*
- Requires *fine-motor control*
- Promotes *executive functioning (resisting impulses)*

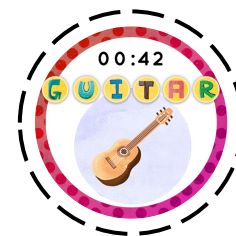


Xylophone Game

When you place the “X” token in Octobo’s bowl, your child transforms into a musician!

Benefits:

- Improves *hand-eye coordination*
- Requires *fine-motor control*
- Requires *gross-motor control*
- Requires *focus*



Spelling Game

Time to spell what you see! Put each letter of the word pictured in Octobo’s bowl before times runs out!

Benefits:

- Provides *spelling practice*
- Requires *phonetic awareness*
- Teaches *sound blending*
- Requires *focus*



Social-Emotional Learning



Brain Exercises



Active Play

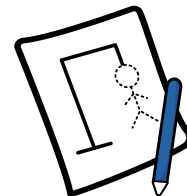


Hangman

(Ideal for: Ages 5+)

Player 1 (the word-maker) uses Octobo's letter tokens to make a secret word or phrase, without letting the other player see, and then flips the tokens so the letters are face-down. Then, Player 2 (the guesser) guesses a letter, one at a time. If they guess one of the letters in the secret word/phrase, flip that token to reveal the letter. If they guess a letter that is not in the secret word/phrase, add a body part to the hangman. If the guesser guesses the secret word/phrase before the entire hangman is drawn, the guesser wins! If the entire hangman is drawn, the word-maker wins!

(If your secret word/phrase uses the same letter more than once, draw a blank line for each letter in the word on a piece of paper, and write in the letters that the guesser correctly guesses.)



Goal: Try to figure out the secret word/phrase!

Here are some ways to push your child's learning in this game:

Basic

The guesser can only guess the secret word/phrase once before they lose

Advanced

Incorporate vocabulary words from Octobo's storybook, your child's classroom lessons, other books they have been reading, or words from around your community.

Super

In order to win the game, the you must also define the secret word!



Players: 2 people

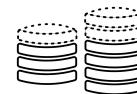
Materials: Tokens, Paper and Pen



Stack 'Em!

(Ideal for: Ages 3+)

Split Octobo's letter tokens so each player has an equal number of tokens in their pile. On the count of three, start stacking! The person who can stack the tokens into a tower (without having the tower fall) wins!



Goal: The person who can stack the tokens the fastest wins!

Here are some ways to push your child's learning in this game:

Basic

1. Use a timer to see how long it takes you to stack 10 tokens. Try to get your time down as low as you can using different stacking strategies!
2. See how many tokens you can stack on a soft surface (couch, carpet, etc...). Now try on a hard surface (table, floor, etc...). Which surface could you stack more tokens on? Why do you think this is?

Advanced

1. Try stacking the tokens in several towers, increasing the number of tokens by one for each tower (tower of 1, tower of 2, tower of 3, tower of 4, etc...)
2. Try stacking with your non-dominant hand only (parents, explain which is their dominant hand, have them stack with the opposite)

Super

1. Try stacking with your eyes closed!
2. Try making a pattern of token towers (tower of 3, tower of 5, tower 7, 3, 5, 7, etc..)
3. Try stacking on your head or knee!
4. Parents: stack the tokens, have child close eyes and try to figure out how many tokens are stacked



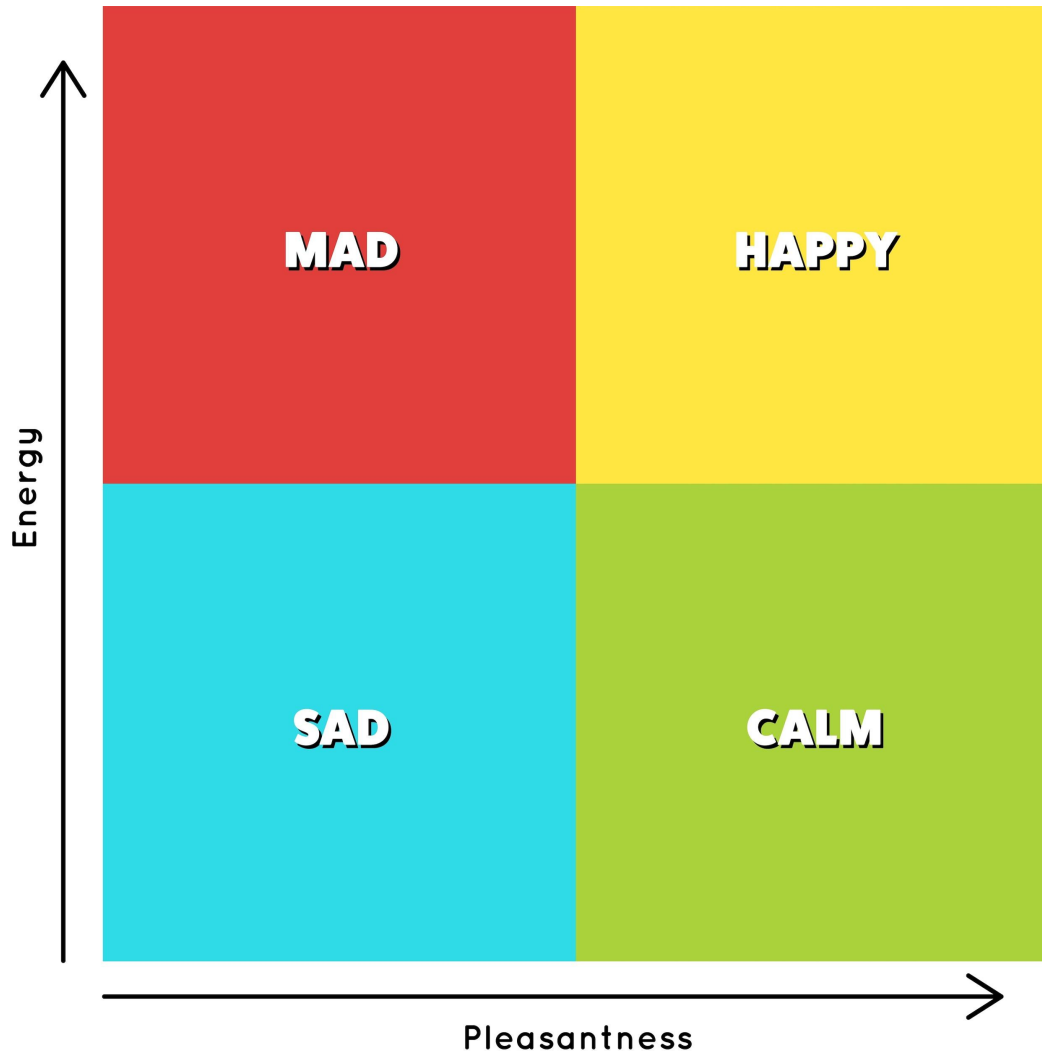
Extended
Play

Players: 2-3 people

Materials: Timer, Tokens

For 2 players, distribute 13 tokens to each player. For 3 players, distribute 8 tokens to each player.





Sight Word Bingo!

up	red	you	his
me	good	with	fun
love	food	blue	more
friend	eat	he	night

Sight Word Bingo!

with	sleep	love	more
fun	eat	good	red
you	blue	he	up
his	before	them	night

Sight Word Bingo!

good	red	sleep	before
up	them	he	night
eat	me	more	his
food	with	fun	blue

Sight Word Bingo!

them	he	sleep	you
with	night	friend	blue
food	fun	love	up
before	more	red	good

Make Your Own Sight Word Bingo!

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Here are some sight words found in *Octobo's Underwater Adventure*:

- Before
- Blue
- Eat
- Food
- Friend
- Fun
- Good
- He
- His
- Love
- Me
- More
- Night
- Red
- Sleep
- Them
- Up
- With
- You

Before

Before

Blue

Blue

Eat

Eat

Food

Food

Friend

Friend

Fun

Fun

Good

Good

His

His

Love

Love

Me

Me

More

More

Night

Night

Red

Red

Sleep

Sleep

Them

Them

Up

Up

With

With

You

You