

The Bunny Ear Adventure: A Lesson in Tying Shoes

Materials Needed:

- A pair of shoes with laces (the student's own shoes are perfect)
 - A shoe tying practice board (can be made from cardboard with holes punched in it)
 - Two different colored pipe cleaners (e.g., one blue, one yellow)
 - A stuffed animal or doll with shoes that can be tied (optional)
 - "Bunny Ear" Poem or Song (see below)
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Lesson Plan Details

Subject: Life Skills & Fine Motor Development

Topic: Introduction to Shoe Tying

Grade Level: Pre-K (Age 4)

Time Allotment: 20 minutes

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate the first step of shoe tying by crossing the laces to make an "X" and pulling one lace under.
- Form at least one loop, or "bunny ear," with a shoelace or pipe cleaner.
- Show understanding of the sequence by attempting to cross the "bunny ears."

2. Instructional Strategies & Lesson Procedure

Part 1: The Hook - The Bunny Story (5 minutes)

1. **Engage with a Story:** Sit with the student and introduce the concept with a fun story. Say, "Today, we're going to teach our shoelaces how to give each other a hug so they can keep our shoes on our feet! We'll use a secret story about two little bunnies."
 2. **Introduce the Poem:** Recite the "Bunny Ears" poem while demonstrating with the pipe cleaners on the practice board. The two colors help distinguish the left and right laces.
"Bunny ears, bunny ears, playing by a tree," (Make two loops)
"Criss-cross the tree," (Cross the loops over each other)
"Trying to catch me."
"Bunny ears, bunny ears, jumped into the hole," (Tuck one loop under the "criss-cross")
"Popped out the other side, beautiful and bold." (Pull the loops tight)
 3. **Sing a Song:** You can also use the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat":
"Tie, tie, tie your shoe,
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*Cross the lace and pull it through.
Make a loop, it's true,
Let's make the other one, too.
Tie, tie, tie your shoe,
You know just what to do!"*

Part 2: Guided Practice - Pipe Cleaner Fun (7 minutes)

1. **Step-by-Step with Pipe Cleaners:** Hand the student the practice board with the two different colored pipe cleaners laced in. Pipe cleaners are great because they are stiff and hold their shape.
2. **The "X" Knot:** Guide the student through the first step. "Let's take our yellow lace and our blue lace and make them cross to say hello, just like an X." Help them tuck one under and pull it tight. "Great! They just gave each other the first part of their hug!" Celebrate this small success enthusiastically.
3. **Making the Ears:** Focus on making just one loop. "Now let's make a big, floppy bunny ear with our blue lace." Use hand-over-hand guidance if needed. Praise their effort. Let them practice making one loop, then the other. Don't worry about combining the steps yet.

Part 3: Independent Practice - Trying on a Real Shoe (5 minutes)

1. **Transition to Laces:** "You did such a great job with the practice board! Are you ready to try it on your very own shoe?"
2. **Student-Led Attempt:** Encourage the student to try the steps on their shoe. Provide verbal prompts from the poem or song. Resist the urge to jump in immediately. Let them problem-solve.
3. **Focus on Effort:** The goal is not perfection. If they only get the first "X" knot, that is a huge victory! Praise the effort loudly: "Look at you! You made the X all by yourself! That is amazing!"

Part 4: Closure and Reinforcement (3 minutes)

1. **Review and Praise:** "We learned so much today! You learned how to make the X and how to make a bunny ear. That's the hardest part, and you were a superstar."
2. **Creative Extension:** If time and interest allow, ask the student to "teach" their stuffed animal how to tie its shoes using the pipe cleaners. This reinforces the steps in a low-pressure, playful way.
3. **Look Ahead:** End on a positive and forward-looking note. "Tying shoes takes lots of practice, just like learning to ride a bike. We can practice our bunny ears again tomorrow!"

3. Differentiation and Inclusivity

- **For Extra Support:** Use two different colored shoelaces in the student's shoe. This helps visually track which lace goes where. Focus on mastering only one step per session (e.g., spend the whole lesson just on the "X" knot until it's consistent). Continue using hand-over-hand assistance as needed.
- **For an Advanced Challenge:** If the student masters the "bunny ear" method quickly, you can introduce the faster "one-loop" method (sometimes called the "squirrel in the tree" method) as a fun new challenge.

4. Assessment Methods

Assessment is informal and observational. Use a simple mental checklist during the lesson:

- **Objective 1 (The "X"):** Did the student successfully cross the laces and pull one under? (Can do with help / Can do independently)

- **Objective 2 (The Loop):** Was the student able to form a loop with a pipe cleaner or lace? (Can do with help / Can do independently)
- **Objective 3 (The Sequence):** Did the student attempt to cross the loops, showing they understand the next step? (Yes / Not yet)
- **Engagement:** Did the student remain engaged and show a positive attitude toward the task?

The primary goal is to build confidence and fine motor skills. Progress, not perfection, is the measure of success.