



Playdatebox

SPIDERWEBS

THE PURPOSE OF A PLAYDATEBOX IS TO CONNECT GENERATIONS THROUGH PLAY



HOW TO BUILD A PLAYDATEBOX

Choose 1 picture book



Choose 1 recipe



Choose 1 or more hands-on activities



Gather supplies in advance for instant fun with the grandkids

Play together in person or via Zoom

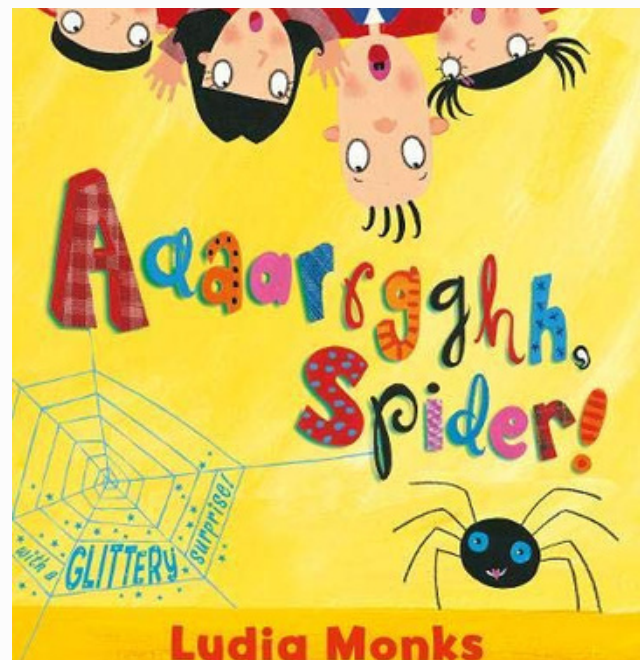
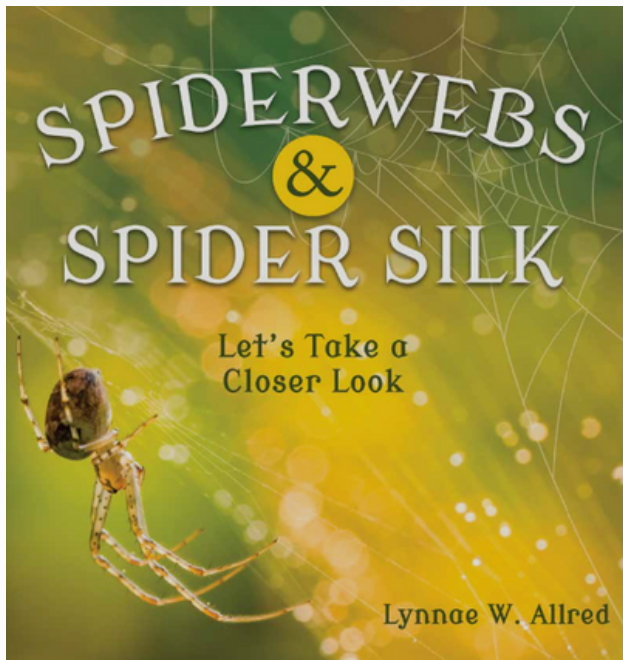
HOW IT WORKS

Develop relationships virtually or in-person

The *Spiderwebs Playdatebox* is a themed box of fun designed to get you and a child you love playing together.

Whether you are making spider pizzas or building a life-sized spider web using yarn, you'll be creating moments that create connection. We've done the heavy lifting to help you find themed children's books and activities. All you need to do is gather supplies that are age-appropriate for your child or grandchild and then start having fun. You'll be developing curiosity, creativity, and connection as you play!

Spiders are scary for some children, so we'll ease into it by learning about fascinating spiderwebs first!



LET'S LEARN ABOUT SPIDERWEBS!

Activity #1

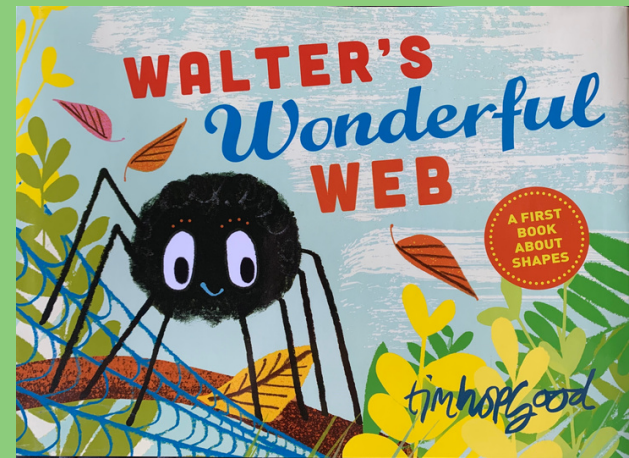
Get Curious About Spiderwebs

We've chosen several fun books you might want to read with your playdate buddy. Pick one that works best for you and find additional ideas on the website at Playdatebox.com/spiders

Spiderwebs and Spider Silk (ages 4-10) If you could pull a spiderweb out of *your* body, what would you create with it? By weight, spider silk is stronger than steel and tougher than kevlar. Learn more in this book authored by Playdatebox founder, Lynnae Allred.

Walter's Wonderful Web: (ages 2-5) This is a great book for preschoolers that teaches persistence while it gives a fun review of basic shapes.

AAAAuuggghh, Spiders!: A comical book that helps us think about spider bias. It could be a great conversation starter for families who want to talk about misjudging others and being more inclusive.



Walter's Wonderful Web includes a fun introduction to basic shapes. Use this book and our scissor skills activity below to help reinforce these two fun concepts for a preschooler!



GO ON A SPIDERWEB HUNT

Activity #2

Make Spiderweb Hunting Glasses

Use a craft kit or your own supplies to make your own [fun spider glasses](#) and use them when you go on an indoor or outdoor spider web hunt. Autumn is a great time to search for and discover spider webs. Often, you can find webs easily in the morning when dew collects. The evening is also a good time to hunt. The low sunlight can help illuminate spider silk. Look near windows that are lit up at night. You'll often find spiderwebs there because the light attracts insects.

Activity #3

Go on a Spiderweb Hunt

This is STEAM learning at its best. This activity, more than any other, will inspire wonder. You will see spiderwebs up close and once you take a closer look, something will change forever!

The common orb web is the most visible type of spiderweb, so it's probably what you think of when spiderwebs come to mind. But there are at least fourteen different web shapes you may never have seen or noticed simply because you've never looked closely.

Take a spray bottle with water so you can lightly mist the spiderwebs you find. This won't harm the spider but makes the intricacies of the web easier to see.

Spark curiosity with a spiderweb hunt!



Recipe: Make Spider Pizzas

[Follow our recipe online](#) to make really cool black widow-like spiders out of black olives. Your pizza can be homemade, or you can add olive spider decorations to a purchased pizza.

You'll need 2-3 olives. Slice off the "star" and to make the roundish cephalothorax. Next, slice an olive lengthwise to get a larger oval to use for the abdomen. You can slice the remaining olive pieces into curved legs. Don't forget to add to smaller "pedipalps" above the spider's head. These are sensory organs spiders use as an organ of touch.

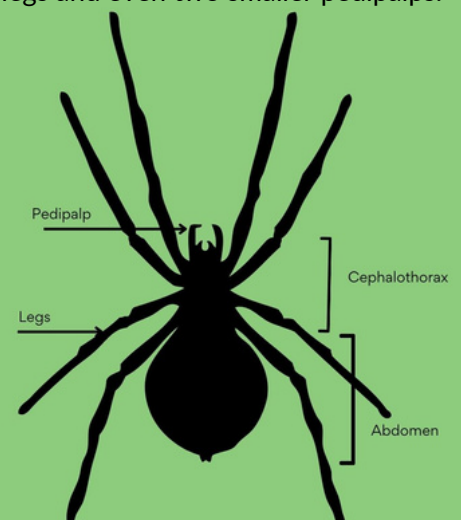
How to Do This Remotely

Set up your own Zoom cooking class and make mini pizzas together using English muffins or tortillas as the base. Spread on prepared pizza sauce and cheese (including pepperoni if you like it). Bake or microwave until the cheese melts.

Add your olive spiders on top and give them a brush of olive oil to make them shine!

Learn Spider Anatomy

Making these simple and tasty personal pizzas is a great way to learn some spider anatomy. You can use olives to build the spider's abdomen and cephalothorax, then slice olives thinly to make 8 spider legs and even two smaller pedipalps.



LET'S MAKE

SPIDER PIZZAS



You'll need:

- English Muffins
- Pizza Sauce
- Mozzarella Cheese
- Pepperoni (optional)
- Black Olives



1. Spread half of an English muffin with some pizza sauce. Add a slice of pepperoni and cover it with mozzarella cheese.
2. Bake at 450 degrees for 4 minutes or until cheese melts. Remove from oven to add olive spiders.
3. Brush 2 large olives with olive oil to make them shiny. Slice off the "star" end to make the front part of the spider's body (cephalothorax)
4. Cut a second olive in half lengthwise to make the back part of the spider's body (thorax)
5. Cut the extra olive pieces crosswise to make legs and pedipalps.



Activity #4

Build a Life-sized Web



Once you've seen how the real experts do it, it will be fun to try to build a spiderweb of your own. Place a few kitchen chairs in an open area and spin lines of web between them with a skein of white yarn. If space is more limited, try spinning your web between any two sturdy points - like the banisters at the head of your stairs or around the legs of a desk or piano bench.

How to Do This Remotely:

Remote web-building is as simple as a video call. Prop your phone or tablet on a tripod and have the child do the same. You'll build your webs separately but you'll be playing together as if you are in the same room.



Activity #5

Build a Pom Pom Spider

Here's a super simple craft. We used colored popsicle sticks, a 2" pom pom, googly eyes, a pipe cleaner, and a glue gun for ours. You can substitute glue dots instead. But you aren't limited to these craft supplies. Make your spider in any creative way that suits you.

How to Do This Remotely:

You'll need craft supplies on both sides of your video call. Just build spiders side-by-side. If you don't have all of the supplies on hand, substitute with what you do have: sticks, cotton balls and more. Just make sure your spider has eight legs and plenty of eyes. Spiders can have up to eight eyes!



Activity #6

Practice Preschool Scissor Skills - Draw and Cut Web Shapes

Scissor skills are really important for preschoolers. Using scissors is more complicated than many of us remember. If you aren't certain your preschooler is ready to use scissors, review the article, [How To Teach Kids Cutting Skills](#) to give you some ideas. If your child can use scissors safely, have some fun by gluing a small plastic spider to a pair of blunt-nosed scissors, or drawing a spider on your child's thumb. Keeping the spider in view at all times will help them keep the scissors in cutting position. Let your child cut around the outside edges of the spider web pattern as if the spider is walking around her own web. Review *Walter's Wonderful Web* and talk about different shapes you could draw to make a web, then cut around your own shapes.

Download extra spiderweb cutting pages at playdatebox.com/spiders



Values to Hand Down

Anxiety drives fear, but curiosity invites wonder.

You probably belong to one of two camps: 1) You think spiders are interesting, or 2) Spiders make you squeamish, and even looking at photos of them makes your skin crawl.

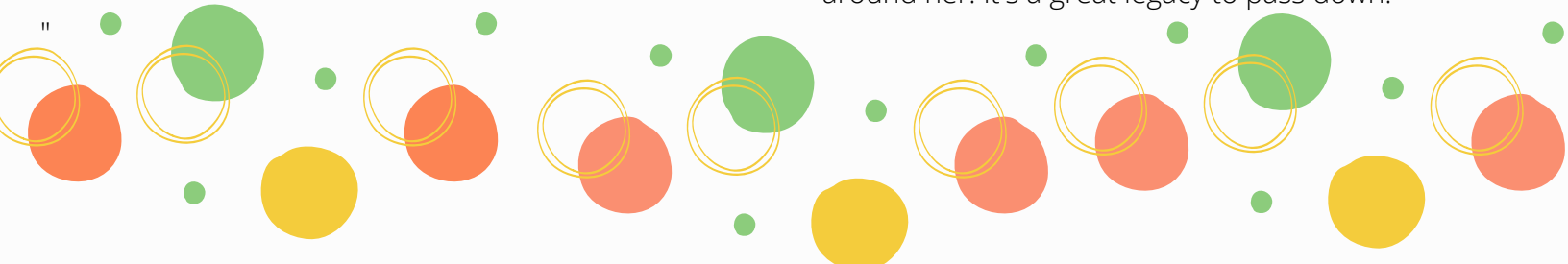
Children are no different. Sometimes they don't understand any better than adults do why a fear response happens when there's no imminent danger. A photograph of a spider poses no real threat to you, but your brain might tell you otherwise.

According to a 1997 study, if you give kids a list of things that might be scary for them, a majority check off things like not breathing, getting hit by a car, bombs, fire, or burglars. But if you let them create their *own* list of what they fear the most, without giving them a list to start from, "spiders" ranked as the top fear for both boys and girls. followed by a fear of being kidnapped, predators, and the dark. Those are all significant sources of fear!

Teaching children and adolescents how to manage childhood fears on their own builds confidence and independence, and grandparents are well suited to help. Life has given us plenty of opportunities to overcome our fears, or at least learn how to manage them better.

Anxiety drives fear, but curiosity invites wonder. Curiosity is a mindset. At its root is a willingness to take in new knowledge and experience. Teach a child to be curious and you have given her a powerful antidote against anxiety.

Learning about spiderwebs and spiders may be the perfect opportunity to let a child you love safely experience some *discomfort* and lean into curiosity. It's a learned skill, and one you will have time to practice again and again as your grandchild learns about the world and people around her. It's a great legacy to pass down!



Connection Question:

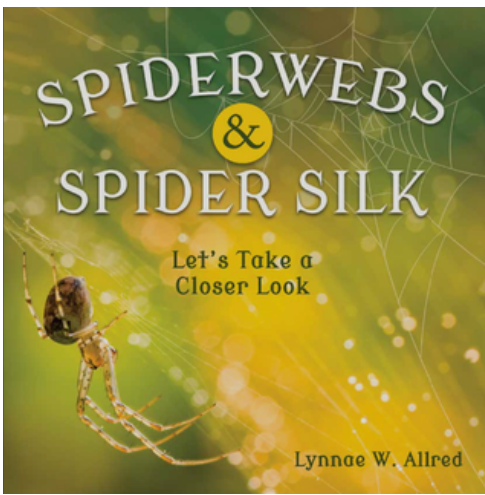
When were you the most afraid you have ever been?

Each month, I include a "connection question" or two that you can ask one another. Sharing these "family stories" will help create bridges of connection between you and your grandchild. Take turns answering any of these questions, and when possible, record or write down the answers!



- Was there ever a time when you didn't think you were going to make it?
- What is one thing you are most afraid of in all the world?
- Were you ever really afraid of trying something and then you found out you actually really liked it?

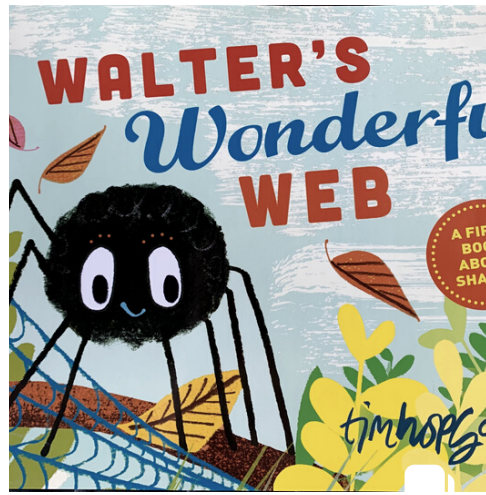
If you are meeting remotely with your grandchild, hit "record" to record these conversations and then use a transcribing application such as temi.com or otter.ai to preserve the answers to these questions. Save them in a binder or journal and add photos if you have them.



[Spider Webs and Spider Silk](#)

Ages: 4-10 years
 Paperback: \$12.99 on Amazon

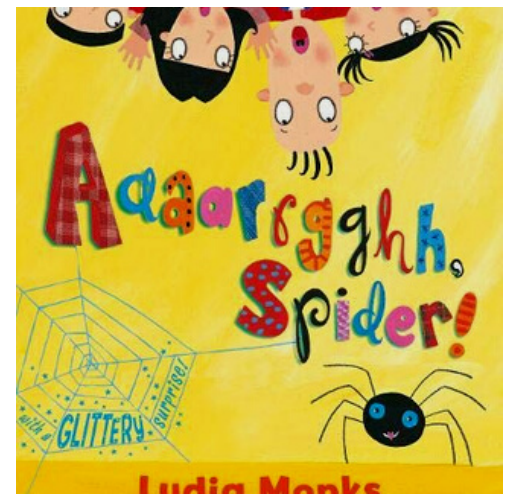
Written by the founder of the Playdatebox website. Learn about all of the fascinating ways spiders use their silk!



[Walter's Wonderful Web](#)

Ages: 2-4 years
 Hardcover: \$14.69

A determined little spider named Walter is trying to make a sturdy web that will stand up to the blustery wind.



[Aaaarrgghh Spiders!](#)

Ages: 2-6 years
 Paperback: \$12.89

All Spider wants is to be a family pet. But the family whose house he lives in are terrified of him.



[Wood Spider Puzzle](#)

\$14.99

Build a spider from this fun puzzle kit. Puzzle lovers will enjoy building this amazing 27-piece wood kit. You could also paint it, if desired.



[Kids' Spider Glasses Kit](#)

(Oriental Trading)

\$9.79 for 12

A fun kit made from craft foam. This is a seasonal item and may be temporarily out of stock.

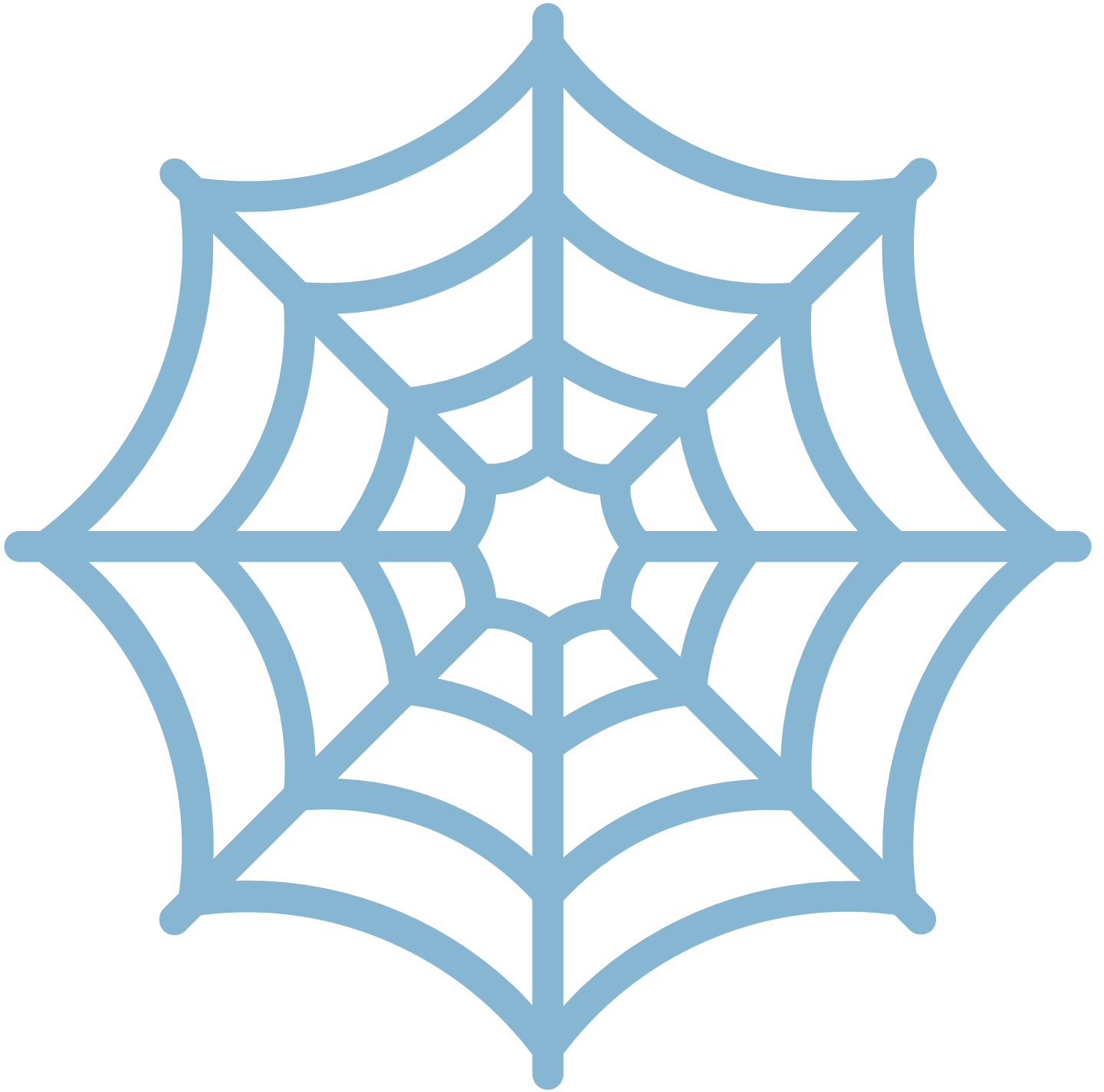


[Spiderweb Tree Swing](#)

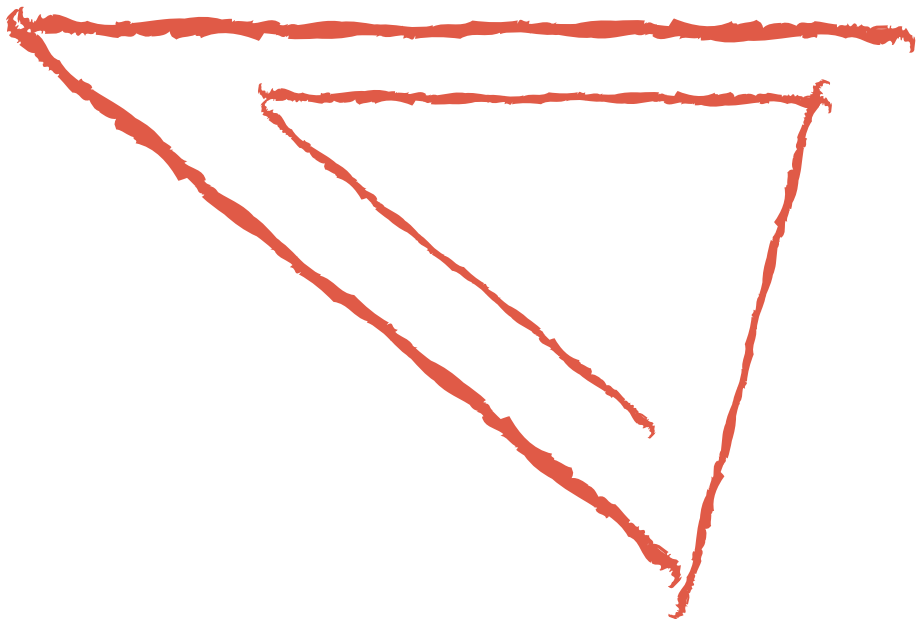
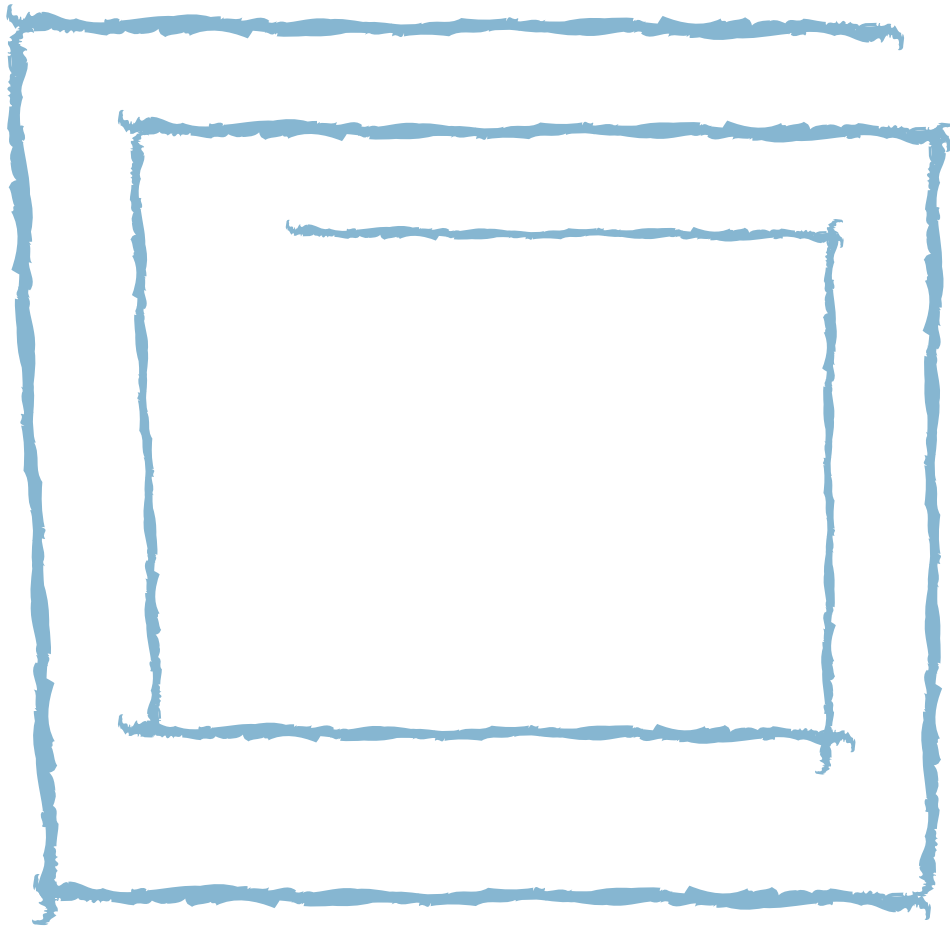
Brand: SunPrint
 \$89.99

With an ultra-durable frame that holds up to 450 lbs and multiple people, this is the perfect tree swing for adults and kids alike! The platform is silk-screened to look like a spider web. This is a quality outdoor swing our grandkids love!

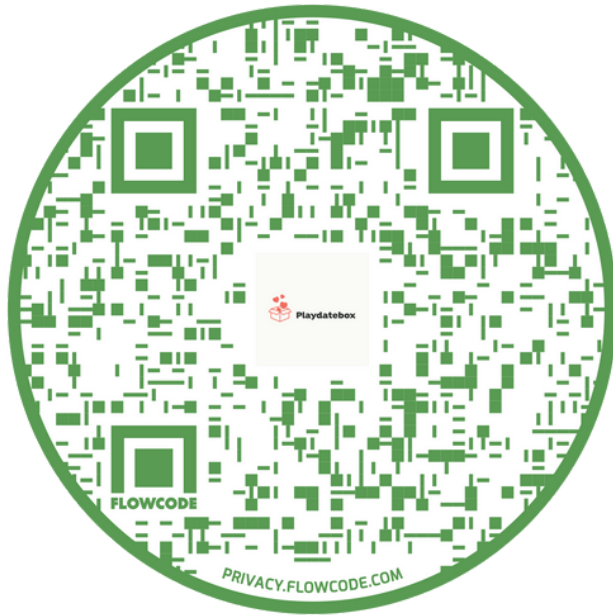
Using your spider scissors, practice cutting along the lines of Walter's web.



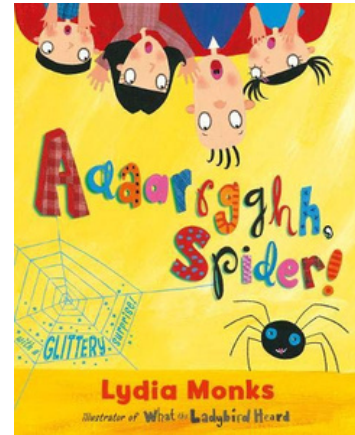
Can you draw more shapes to practice cutting?



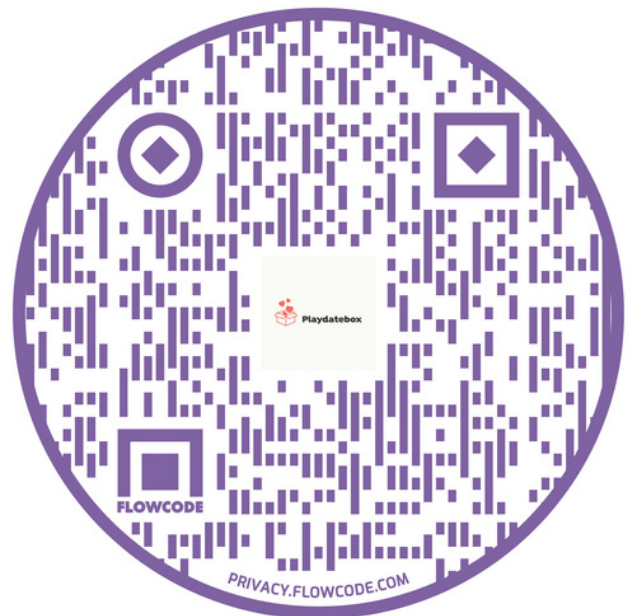
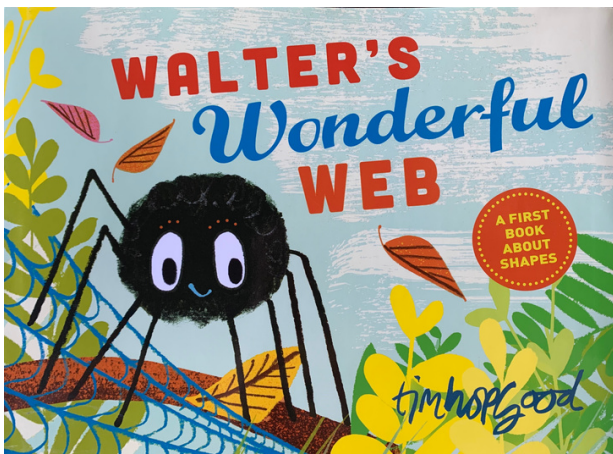
Finish drawing Walter's square web and triangle web, and then practice cutting along the lines with your spider scissors.



A grownup can help you scan this QR code with a smartphone to read a fun story, Aaaarrgggh, Spider! by Lydia Monks



This code will take you to the book, "Walter's Wonderful Web" by Tim Hopgood.





If you are new at playing with grandchildren, and feel a little overwhelmed after looking at all of these ideas, don't worry. Just simplify your activities as directed. Choose one book plus one activity. That's all you need for a Playdate!

Our vision is that you will use the contents of this newsletter to help you connect with a child you love, regardless of distance! Most Playdatebox activities are designed so that they can also be enjoyed "remotely" via videoconferencing software like Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Just assemble supplies on both sides of the call so that you can play "together." Visit our website, Playdatebox.com for lots of ideas on how to do this in creative ways.

If you enjoy these ideas, please let others know, and tag us on social media with a photo of you enjoying a Playdatebox activity.

We love to engage with our customers and give away free Playdateboxes every month on our Instagram feed. Find us at @playdate_box and follow us for your chance to win. We share all of our best ideas about creating family fun.



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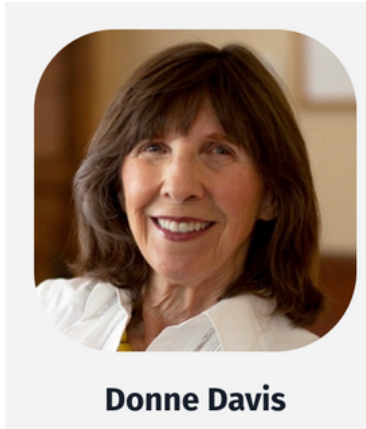


etsy.com/shop/MyPlaydateBox



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GRANDPARENT RESOURCES TO TRY...



Donne Davis



*Grandpa
Date*



Visit [MakeMomentos.com](https://www.makemomentos.com) to purchase a favorite children's eBook and email a copy to a child with YOU as the narrator. A simple-to-use interface allows you to record a 30-second greeting first, and then record the narration of the book. Send your personalized audio eBook directly to a child you love.



If you are a grandmother who is absolutely GaGa about those little people you love, we have a group of women you ought to meet! Donne Davis heads the GaGa Sisterhood, a national membership organization of women who explore together what it means to be a modern grandmother. Join this fun-loving group at [GaGaSisterhood.com](https://www.gagasisterhood.com)



If you are a grandfather, you might be looking for a fun way to connect. If spiderwebs aren't your thing, how about chess? Here's a fun look in on a [recent grandpa date](#) with Grandpa Garth! What would you do on a Grandpa Date?