



PLAY & SAY

Ages 3-7

puppets



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These playful puppets help young kids talk about feelings, practice calming strategies, and build the language of the brain through movement, imagination, and connection.

The rhymes in this set come directly from [B Is for Brain](#) — a playful ABC adventure designed to help little learners build emotional smarts alongside Riley and friends.

We hope you and the brave cubs in your life enjoy this free excerpt from the expanded Digital Resource Pack.

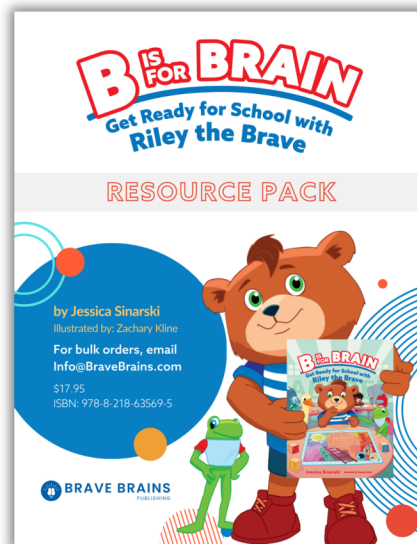


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DISCLAIMER: These resources are for informational purposes only. They should not be used to diagnose or treat any medical, mental health, or other condition.

Get Ready for School with Riley the Brave
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PLAY & SAY PUPPETS

Make your own set of playful puppets to help kids talk about feelings and choose wise next steps.

Each puppet includes a short rhyme from *B Is for Brain* to help big ideas stick with little learners.

TO ASSEMBLE

1. Print the front and back single sided (card stock optional).
2. Cut along the grey lines.
3. Glue or tape the matching front and back to a craft stick, straw, or small paper tube to create your puppets.

AT HOME

- Practice the rhymes together. Try saying them with movements or silly voices to help them stick.
- Use a puppet during your own tricky moments to model the strategies on the back and show how to choose a wise next step.
- Add puppets to story time to help kids wonder: “*What brain is this character using?*”
- Gently offer a puppet as a nonverbal way for kids to show how they’re feeling (words can be hard for the Downstairs Brain).

IN THE CLASSROOM

- Some of our younger students can’t sit still for a full read-aloud. Consider starting with a few pages of *B Is for Brain* as you introduce one puppet at a time using simple language like:
 - “*Sometimes our brain feels ROAR-y like a Tiger.*”
- Use puppets during morning check-ins. Ask:
 - “*Which one shows how your brain feels today?*”
- Use the rhymes on the back to practice calming strategies in a playful way as you clap, stretch, stomp, or breathe along together.
- Add puppets to your read-aloud routine. Pause and ask:
 - “*Is this a Tiger moment or an Upstairs Brain moment?*”
- Keep a set in your cozy corner or imaginative play space. Kids learn the concepts better when they integrate them into their play.
- Share how you climb your brain stairs too.
 - “*My Porcupine brain is loud right now. I feel really grumpy. I’m going to cool off and count to ten.*”



Not sure how to introduce the puppets? Try starting with one. Tiger or Turtle moments are great conversation openers!

PLAY & SAY PUPPETS

(CONTINUED)

IN COUNSELING OR HOME VISITS

- Use puppets to help kids and families name what they are feeling playfully.
- Practice the rhymes and strategies together using movement, play, or sensory tools. Remind parents that it takes *lots* of repetition to build skills.
 - Introduce one puppet per session or as needed. Start with the state most relevant to the child's experience (e.g., Tiger for explosive outbursts, Turtle for withdrawal).
 - Explore what each brain state feels like in the body and what helps it feel safe again. Pair with drawing, play doh, sand tray, or whatever other modalities you use.
 - Keep a set visible or easily accessible in your space so kids can reach for one as a nonverbal cue when talking feels too hard.
 - For groups: use the puppets in role plays, social stories, or as part of SEL lessons. Let students practice choosing which brain showed up and what helped.

Repeat the rhymes
across sessions.
They offer built-in
scripts for self-talk
and regulation!



KEEP IN MIND

These puppets aren't just cute—they're tools for building emotional awareness, language, and problem-solving skills. The more they're used, the stronger those Upstairs Brain pathways get.





M IS FOR MAD

M is for **Mad**. When my Tiger comes out,
I want to roar, stomp, fuss, scream, and shout.

But I know a trick to stay super cool.
Stop, breathe, and think—works at home
or at school.

Excerpt from B Is for Brain (Sinarski, 2025)

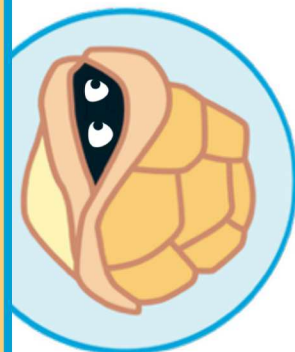


P IS FOR PORCUPINE

Porcupine Brain—that starts with a **P**.
Do you grump and growl sometimes
just like me?

When I feel prickly, I take a quick pause...
Cool off, count to ten, and lower my claws.

Excerpt from B Is for Brain (Sinarski, 2025)



T IS FOR TURTLE

T is for **Turtle**, curled up in my shell.
Sad, embarrassed, or scared? It can be hard to tell.

Whatever I feel, I know I'm okay.
I take one small step. I'm finding my way.

Excerpt from B Is for Brain (Sinarski, 2025)



K IS FOR KIND

K is for **Kind**—
it's the best way to be.

Gentle paws, wait my turn.
Try and you'll see!

Excerpt from B Is for Brain (Sinarski, 2025)



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Books, visuals, activities, and more to help young kids build real-life skills. Free US shipping on orders over \$40.