Transcript: Creating Bug Houses (3–5 years)

Text on screen: Creating Bug Houses (3–5 years).

Logo: Count, play, explore—for early education.

On screen: Shannon Burch, Preschool Educator speaks from a classroom. As Shannon speaks, children are shown creating structures with foam blocks, scraps of cardboard, and paper towel rolls with Shannon's assistance.

Shannon Burch: The importance of engineering in early childhood education is because children have that early understanding that not everything comes perfectly fit, that someone has to make it.

On screen: Shannon and a group of children are outdoors, looking for insects in the dirt.

Shannon: So over the last six weeks, we have been discussing insects and bugs. Our first two weeks, we discussed what an insect was, its properties, body parts. And then we discussed the importance of the insects to our environment. And then these last two weeks, we've been discussing what types of homes that the insects and bugs are living in.

On screen: Shannon and a group of children surround a table looking at pictures of various natural habitats. Shannon then holds up one of the pictures.

Shannon: What kind of home is this?

Calvin: A bumblebee home.

Shannon: A bumblebee home. What do they call that?

Calvin: A cocoon.

Shannon: A cocoon?

Child 1: No.

Shannon: So this is …

Calvin: A beehive.

Shannon: A beehive. That's right.

I let them know that we're going to go outside. We're going to explore the insects' homes outside, the natural homes.

On screen: An educator and two students crouch next to a wall, sifting through sand on the ground.

Child 2: You dig like this?

Educator 1: Yeah.

Child 2: You want to find a bug in here? Come on. We need to dig slowly.

On screen: Shannon speaks from a classroom as scenes of children collecting and assembling different materials are displayed.

Shannon: When we came in from outside, after our exploration of the different insects' homes, we came in to build a colony or a habitat. I allowed them to pull out whatever materials they felt they needed. Some were block materials, some were recycled materials, and then we even had them gather some materials from outside. We had some large structures and then we had some small structures. I had one friend, he only used tubes. He taped four or five paper towel rolls because he said his favorite insect was bees. And then another friend had bent a piece of cardboard into a tent shape and there was the large structure. A lot of it was hollow, dark. I would say he was trying to incorporate the dark cold areas underground for these insects. Explorative play is definitely a trial and error for the children. Some get frustrated, so we have to problem solve and ask the questions, "Well, what do you think will help fix this?" I try not to provide a suggestion right away, I give the children opportunity.

On screen: Shannon kneels among a group of children with paper towel rolls and other objects. She helps them tape the rolls together.

Ellie: This is falling down.

Shannon: It keeps falling down? Why do you think it's falling? Why do you think it's falling?

Calvin: Because it needs some tape.

Shannon: It needs some tape. It needs more tape than this, Calvin says. Do you want to put more?

Ellie: Yeah.

Shannon: Where do you think we need to put the tape at, Ellie?

Ellie: Over there, over there, over there.

Shannon: Over there. Do you think we need some on the other side too, or just this side?

Ellie: On this side.

On screen: Toy insects are shared among the children.

Shannon: I provided insects to offer the children during this activity because I wanted them to test their structure to see if the insects were comfortable in it, if the insects felt safe. So I had my friends explain their structures by asking them questions such as, where does your insect live? Or what kind of home is this? Or which insect lives here?

On screen: Shannon kneels next to a child, pointing at wood and foam blocks arranged in a stack.

Shannon: What is this part? What is this part of the house?

Child 3: So my bugs can fly.

Shannon: Your bugs can fly off?

Child 3: Uh-huh. It goes like this—whee-oo!

On screen: The child pretends the insect can fly. Shannon redirects him to this structure.

Shannon: Okay. What part of the house is this?

Child 3: That goes right here.

Shannon: That goes right there? And what is that part of the house for?

Child 3: That's my roof.

Shannon: That's your roof.

Child 3: And that's my bed.

Shannon: That's your bed. Questions arise every day in everyday life and giving them these opportunities to build from, through play, gives them that opportunity to build knowledge. The spider fits in that one?

Child 4: Yeah.

Child 3: Let me try it.

On screen: A child inserts one of the toy insects into the stack of foam and wood blocks.

Shannon: Let's try it. Oh, you squeezed him in there. He likes it. It's dark.

Text on screen: A special thanks to the children, families, and staff of the Office of the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools' Lighthouse for Children Child Development Center, without whose help these videos would not have been possible.

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