

Don't Draw In This Book

The 2026 CLEL Bell Award Book for WRITE

by Bill Cotter

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***Don't Draw In This Book* is a touch-and-trace interactive story which pulls readers into the action. Larry has a magic sketchbook—when you “draw” using your finger to trace shapes, it makes something new happen on the next page! This board book makes writing fun and engaging while encouraging kids to become a playful part of the storytelling as you read.**

Activity Ideas for *Don't Draw In This Book*:

- Go on a word hunt in your daily life. Signs can be a fun way to find large letters, perfect for your child to trace with their fingers. Point to the words as you read the sign aloud together, pausing on the different sounds that make up each word.
- Try whole-body play to explore letters. Have your child lay down on the ground or outside on the grass to form simple letter shapes, like C, O, L, and S. To make bigger letters, like M, N, E, and P, search together for objects that could be added. This builds spatial and body awareness while making multiple connections in the brain to language and reading. If you like, take a picture after they form the letter, and you can look back at the picture together to read the letter again.
- Act out the story as you read. You can use a sock or scarf to trace in the air instead of on the page. Then try having your child tell their own story, where they tell you the action and what to draw, and then they pick what silly action comes next.
- Have fun with water, like Larry in the story! Painting with water is a fun way to explore mark making, and it cleans itself up on a hot day! Try brushes, sponges, or your feet!

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit <http://www.clel.org> and select the CLEL Bell Awards tab.



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