



## Craft Activity

**Theme:** Australian Animals - Echidna

**Intro:** Echidnas are one of only two “Monotremes” in the world. Monotremes are egg-laying mammals, with the other monotreme being a Platypus. There are 2 species of echidnas; a long-beaked echidna and a short-beaked echidna. Learn more about Echidnas at Playgroup today!

**Craft activity:** Spiky Matchstick Echidnas

**Children will need:** Echidna template (can be directly photocopied onto brown paper or card, or as a white cardboard template that children/families can trace onto paper/card), scissors, glue, matchsticks, textas, coloured card/paper, sticker eyes (optional).

### Instructions:

Trace the echidna template onto card/paper (if required). Use scissors to cut out the Echidna template. Draw the echidna’s eyes (or use a sticker eye), nose and any other features you wish. Place small dabs of glue onto the body of the echidna and place matchsticks on each dob. Let dry.



**Extension Idea:** Use bright or natural coloured matchsticks to give your echidna a different look.

Can you name your echidna? Count how many spikes are on your echidna. Visit the Zoo to find the echidnas.

**Fact:** Echidnas can also be called “Spiny Ant-Eaters.” Echidnas don’t have beaks, rather, they have fleshy noses that can be long or short and they are only found in Australia and New Guinea. The spikes on an echidna are called quills.



**Learning Outcome 2:** Children are connected with and contribute to their world.

## Coordinator extension ideas and group time guide

### Sensory activities: Playdough Echidnas

Brown playdough, matchsticks, small sticks, bark or any items found on the nature hunt.

Make an echidna with some brown playdough (see attached recipe). Decorate your echidna using matchsticks, sticks, gumnuts, leaves, bark or other natural items found from the outdoor nature hunt.

### Outside Activity:

Go on a nature hunt to find some bark, small sticks, gumnuts or other natural items to decorate your Playdough Echidna.

### Group time ideas:

- Make a Fruit Echidna for morning tea. (Cut a watermelon in half and lay flat side down. Make fruit kebabs and put these into the skin of the watermelon to make the echidna's quills. Please note: Adult assistance and supervision will be required at all times for this activity).
- Pretend to be an echidna (children can crawl, roll, make themselves into a small ball)
- Show and Tell - children can talk about the echidnas they made at Playgroup.

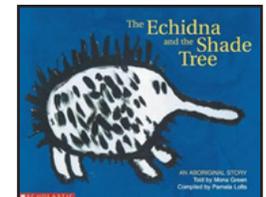
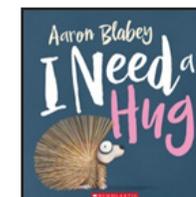
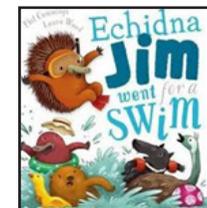


### Book Suggestions:

Echidna Jim went for a swim- Phil Cummings & Laura Wood

I need a hug – Aaron Blabey

The Echidna and the shade tree – An Aboriginal story told by Mona Green. Compiled by Pamela Lofts





## I love my Echidna

Don Spencer/Allan Caswell

Published by MCA-Gilbey

(available on Youtube, or on CD-Feathers, Fur or Fins by Don Spencer))

Chorus

I love my echidna,

Mm - I love my echidna.

No one else has got a pet like mine.

He's prickly and small,

He won't chase a ball,

But me and my echidna get on fine.

Dogs and cats and birds are fun,

But they're not right for everyone,

And an elephant's too big to keep at home.

Though occasionally he spikes me,

Deep down I know he likes me,

It's fun to have an echidna of your own.

I love my echidna,

I love my echidna.

I met him when we both were very young.

It was purely by chance,

He was looking for ants,

Which he caught with his long and sticky tongue.

Now when I take him to a barbeque,

I don't need to tell him what to do,

Well, he keeps the bugs and ants away from me.

At picnics he's a big success,

Well you couldn't fail but be impressed

At how useful an echidna friend can be

I love my echidna,

I love my echidna.

No one else has got a pet like mine.

He's prickly and small,

He won't chase a ball,

But me and my echidna get on fine.

Now, dogs and cats and birds are fun,

But they're not right for everyone,

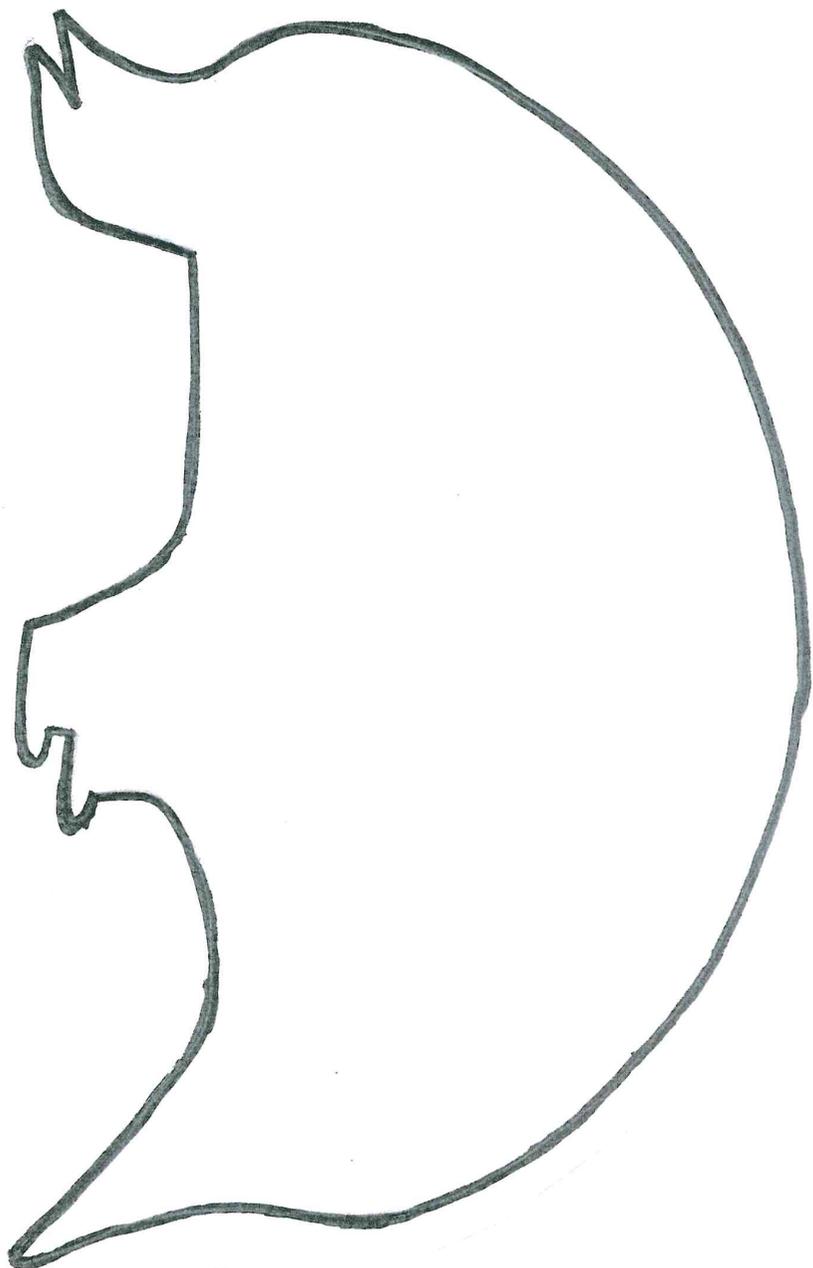
And an elephant's too big to keep at home.

Though occasionally he spikes me,

Deep down I know he likes me,

It's fun to have an echidna of your own.

Oh yes, it's fun to have an echidna of your own.





## Playdough Recipe

- 1 Cup plain flour
- ½ cup salt
- 2 tablespoons cream of tartar
- 1 tablespoon cooking oil
- Approx 1 cup boiling water
- 2 tablespoons Cinnamon or cocoa powder

Mix together dry ingredients

Mix oil into water and add slowly until dough forms

Knead until smooth and stretchy

Store in an airtight container

in the fridge

\*You may need to double the recipe to ensure there's enough Playdough for all children

