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We used simple props like blocks for a phone and an old computer keyboard as a cash register to make a restaurant. When props are simple, children use their imagination and cognitive skills to pretend one object is something else. It doesn't seem like much, but pretending a block is a phone is the beginning of symbolic thought. Symbolic thought is what allows us to know that the number 2 means a set of two items and the letters "C, A, T" say cat and represent a furry feline.