

the determination to conquer the elusive skill produces pain and frustration (e.g., putting paper in and taking it out of a toy car) (Fig. 3-6).



FIG 3-6 After infants develop new skills to grasp and manipulate, they begin to conquer new abilities, such as putting paper in a toy car and taking it out.

Unoccupied behavior: In unoccupied behavior, children are not playful but focusing their attention momentarily on anything that strikes their interest. Children daydream, fiddle with clothes or other objects, or walk aimlessly. This role differs from that of onlookers, who actively observe the activity of others.

Dramatic, or pretend, play: One of the vital elements in children's process of identification is dramatic play, also known as *symbolic* or *pretend play*. It begins in late infancy (11 to 13 months) and is the predominant form of play in preschool children. After children begin to invest situations and people with meanings and to attribute affective significance to the world, they can pretend and fantasize almost anything. By acting out events of daily life, children learn and practice the roles and identities modeled by the members of their family and society. Children's toys, replicas of the tools of society, provide a medium for learning about adult roles and activities that may be puzzling and frustrating to them. Interacting with the world is one way children get to know it. The simple, imitative, dramatic play of toddlers, such as using the telephone, driving a car, or rocking a doll, evolves into more complex, sustained dramas of preschoolers, which extend beyond