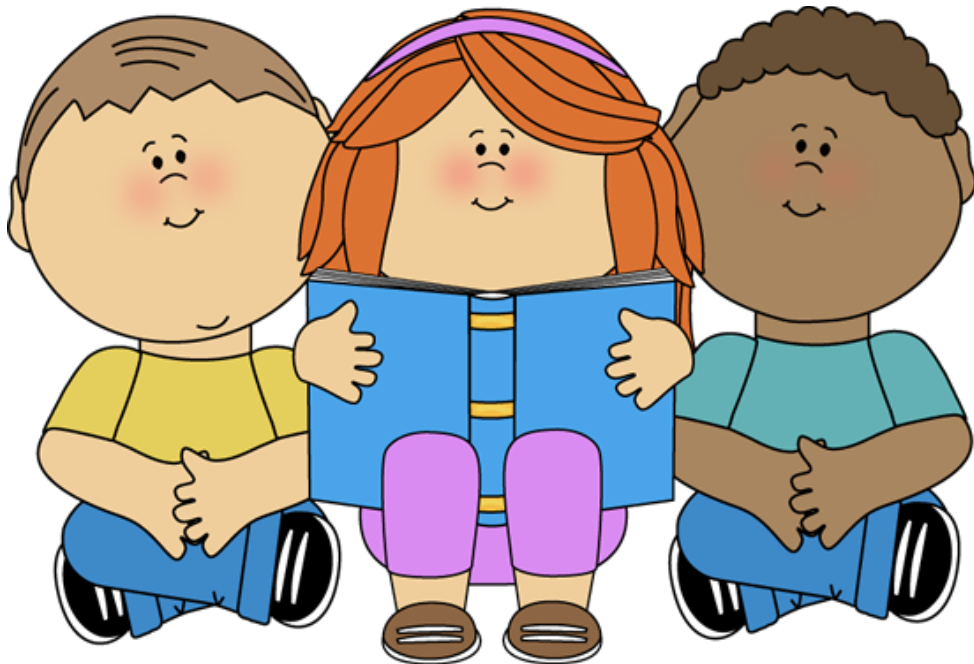


West Park School

Kindergarten

Activities



**All I Ever Really Needed to Know
I Learned In Kindergarten**

Most of what I really need to know about how to live and what to do and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate mountain, but there in the sandbox at the nursery school.

These are the things I learned: Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody. Wash your hands before you eat. Flush. Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you. Live a balanced life. Learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon. When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands and stick together. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup. The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the plastic cup - they all die. So do we.

And then remember the book about Dick and Jane and the first word you learned, the biggest word of all: LOOK. Everything you need to know is in there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and sane living.

Think of what a better world it would be if we all - the whole world - had cookies and milk about 3 o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankets for a nap. Or if we had a basic policy in our nations to always put things back where we found them and cleaned up our own messes. And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is better to hold hands and stick together.

• *Robert Fulghum*

What Is Readiness?

By Martha P. Howlett

Readiness is ...

a child who listens

- to directions without interrupting.
- to stories and poems for five to ten minutes without restlessness.

a child who hears

- words that rhyme.
- words that begin with the same sound or different sounds.

a child who sees

- likenesses and differences in pictures and designs.
- letters and words that match.

a child who understands

- the relationship inherent in such words as up and down, top and bottom, over and under, little and big.
- the classification of words that represent people, places, and things.

a child who speaks clearly and can

- stay on topic in class discussions.
- retell a story or poem in correct sequence.
- tell a story or relate an experience of his/her own.

a child who thinks and can

- give the main idea of a story.
- give unique ideas and important details.
- give reasons for his/her opinions.

a child who adjusts

- to changes in routine and to new situations without becoming fearful.
- to opposition or defeat without crying or sulking.
- to the necessity of asking for help when needed.

a child who obeys

- classroom rules as established by the teacher.
- safety rules on playground and school bus.
- fire drill rules quickly and quietly.

a child who plays

- cooperatively with other children.
- and shares, takes turns, and assumes his share of the group responsibility.
- and can run, jump, skip, and bounce a ball with comparative dexterity.

a child who works

- without being easily distracted.
- and follows directions.
- and completes each task.
- and takes pride in his/her work.

Helping Young Children Become Successful Learners

From Birth Children Need:

1. To be talked to daily
2. To be read to daily
3. To hear lots of positive language from:
 - A. conversations
 - B. books
 - C. nursery rhymes
 - D. children's songs
 - E. finger plays
 - F. poems
 - G. shopping experiences
 - H. cooking experiences
 - I. trips
 - J. church
 - K. neighbors
 - L. television

Children Need To Know:

1. Their first, middle, and last names
2. The names of their parents
3. The names of relatives - sisters, brothers, grandparents
4. Their age and birthday
5. The names of things inside the home
6. The function (use) of things in the home
7. The names of things outside the home
8. The names of foods
9. The names of clothing
10. The names of at least the eight basic colors
11. How to count
12. How to count objects in a set
13. Many math words - many, more, less, half, fourth, inches, pounds, dollars, cents, etc.
14. Names for seasons
15. Names for feelings
16. Names for sizes - tall, short, big, little, large, small, etc.
17. Names for positions - on, under, in front, behind

from: EMHARTATI Advanced Technology Inc./2601 Fortune Circle East/Indianapolis, IN 46241
Telephone 800-456-2380/317-244-8160



There are a lot of ways to help your child learn early reading skills during everyday activities around the house or while driving in the car.

Talking with your child each day about letters and words printed on packages, boxes, books, or signs are all fun and easy ways to help your child learn early reading skills.

There are several things that it is helpful to remember when you are trying to help your child learn early reading skills.

- Read to your child every day.
- Not only should you read to your child every day, but also have your child read to you. Even if your child is not yet able to read the words on the page, many children can “read” their favorite books by looking at the pictures, turning the pages, and retelling the story or making up a story to go along with the pictures on the page.
- If your child has difficulty sitting through an entire book from beginning to end, remember that you can “read” a book with your child by simply turning the pages, looking at the pictures, and making up a story based on what you see on the pages.
- Don’t worry if your child wants you to read the same books again and again.
- While reading, ask your child to point to objects pictured on the page. Use phrases like “Show me the dog” “Where’s the car?”, “etc.
- When reading with your child, stop and ask your child what he or she thinks will happen next before turning the page.
- Remember that you do not have to use a book in only one way. You can work on to your child by looking at the pictures on the pages and counting objects, telling the color of the objects, or talking about things that are the same or different from one picture to the next.

Provide your child with opportunities to play with writing materials. Give your child paper to draw on and give them things to draw or write with (crayons, markers, pencils, gel pens, chalk, etc.)

In addition to providing your child with opportunities to write, let them see your writing as well. For example, let your child see you writing checks, grocery lists, notes, cards, etc.

When reading with your child, help him or her become more familiar with the book itself and how books work.

- Put the book in your child's lap with the cover facing up.
- Before opening the book, point out each word in the title as you read the title with your child.
- Spend a few moments looking at the pictures on the cover and on the first page and talk about them with your child. Discuss the objects in the pictures, what is happening in the pictures, what the story might be about, and what might happen next.
- Use your finger to point to each word as you read to your child. This will help your child learn to follow the text of a book from the left to the right, and from the top to the bottom of the page.
- Point out to your child where the story begins and where the story ends.

Playing rhyming word games, talking about words that rhyme, and playing games with word sounds are all good ways to help children develop early reading skills.

- Read nursery rhymes with your child and act them out with hand or body motions, sounds, songs, etc.
- Sing to your child; make up silly words to rhyme with your songs.
- Read Dr. Seuss books to your child.
- Play rhyme games with your child. Tell your child you are going to say two words. If the words rhyme, your child should do something (clap hands, jump up and down, stand up, etc.) If the words do not rhyme, your child should either do nothing or do something different. For example, if the words rhyme, your child should clap his or her hands, but if they do not rhyme, he or she should stand up.
- Play a game in which you change the first sounds of words and your child has to guess which word you are trying to say. Think of any topic like lunch, picnic, or going to the zoo, and say a word that goes along with that topic, but change the beginning letter sound. For example, say "Today we will have napes for lunch" and have your child guess the word you are trying to say. In this case - grapes. Other examples would be fanana for banana; marrots for carrots; pacaroni for macaroni; tackers for crackers; dereal for cereal; or bup cakes for cup cakes.

Have a “Letter of the Day”. Choose a letter for the day. Spend some time writing that letter with your child. Then have your child trace or copy the letter, or make it out of play dough or pipe cleaners, or something else. Talk about the shape of the letter and the directions that the pencil moves in to write the letter. Look for that letter throughout the day. Try to find it in books or on signs, boxes, etc. You can do this around the house, outside, or while driving in the car.

Like the “Letter of the Day”, you can also have a “Sound of the Day”. Choose a sound and look for things all day that start with that sound. For example, if the “Sound of the Day” is the “B” sound, spend the day trying to find as many things that start with that sound as you can - boots, bike, ball, bat, bear, beans, etc. This is another activity that you can do around the house, outside, or while driving in the car.

To help your child practice tracing or writing his or her name, use color change markers by Crayola. You can write your child’s name and then he or she can trace over it. This is fun because the child can make the letters change colors, but it also helps the child practice writing his or her name. Write your child’s name using uppercase and lowercase letters instead of all upper case. For example, write your child’s name as “John” instead of “JOHN”.

Eat Alpha-Bits cereal without milk for snacks. You can then name the letters and spell your child’s name and words with the letters while snacking.

Let your child type on the computer with your assistance. Name letters and numbers while typing and encourage your child to find them on the keyboard.

Use magnetic or foam letters and sort them with your child. Sort them into groups such as - ones with circles (B, P, O), ones with all straight lines (T, L, H), ones with points (V, A, W), etc.

Label your child’s room, toy storage, dresser, etc. to help him or her get used to seeing words in print, and to help your child develop organizational skills.

Have your child help you write letters, thank you notes, or cards to family and friends, or have your child dictate to you what he or she would like to say. This will help your child start to see the importance of reading and writing, as well as the connection between spoken words and written words.

When going places with your child, ask him or her what letters are on signs, what letter the word on the sign starts with, or what the sign says. For example, when you go to McDonald’s, ask the child what letter McDonald’s starts with.

Whenever possible, discuss letters present on box labels, etc. with your child. A great time to do this is at breakfast, while making lunch or dinner, or when shopping at the grocery store.

Talk about the letters on the cereal boxes or other labels. Have your child help you find his or her favorite food when you go to the store, by looking at the letters on the box or label.

Make letters using play dough, pipe cleaners, or Wikki Sticks. You can also make letters with your child while playing in the sand.

Help your child start to recognize words in print by cutting the names from old boxes of your child's favorite foods (cereal, fruit snacks, granola bars, etc.) You can then play games with your child by having your child name what used to be in the box. While playing, discuss the letters in the words on the boxes.

When you go to the store, help your child learn to recognize his or her name by looking for magnets and other personalized items with your child's name on it. Start by helping your child look for the first letter in his or her name and then work toward recognizing the entire name. When you find things with your child's name on them tell your child what each letter is.

You can also help your child begin to recognize his or her name by doing puzzles with your child's name on it. Many toy stores sell name puzzles made out of wood.

Play the Name Game with your child:

Name Game 1

On a piece of paper, write the names of the people in your family and/or names of friends. Count how many letters are in each person's name. You may even want to add a picture of each person by his or her name. This will help your child identify his or her own name, as well as family member's names, in print. After counting the letters, talk about who has the most, least, or same amount of letters in their name.

Name Game 2

To help your child learn the placement of letters in his or her name and to help with identifying letters, write your child's name on a piece of paper. Cut the letters of your child's name apart. ON another piece of paper, write your child's name again. Have your child match the cut apart letters of his or her name to the written letters of his or her name. To extend this activity, you may also do this with family member's names.

Remember - when writing your child's name or the names of others, the first letter is capital and the remaining letters are lowercase.

READING TO YOUR CHILD

Reading to children has become a lost art in the last few years. Television and computers have taken over as the only form of entertainment we seem to consider. Reading to our children can add excitement and enjoyment to our children's lives. Children of all ages enjoy being read to. Here are a few useful tips to follow when reading to your child.

1. Pick a regular time for reading every day.
2. Choose a time with no interruptions from television or telephone.
3. Find a place that is quiet and cozy.
4. Read with expression, but not too dramatically.
5. Make sure your child can see the pictures and words.
6. Have fun reading to your child!

The following pages can be used to work on letter and sound skills with your child.

The pages of uppercase and lowercase letters can be used to work on letter sounds by:

- naming the letters with your child
- asking your child to find a letter you name
- asking your child to name a letter that you point to

The pages of uppercase and lowercase letters can be used to work on letter sounds by:

- talking about each letter and the sound it makes
- saying a letter sound and having your child find the letter that makes that sound
- asking your child to say the sound of a letter that you point to

	B		S		P
L		U		G	D
	J		M		W
Z		A		R	H
	Y		T		O
N		I		X	V
	F		C		Q
		E		K	

	b		s		p	
l		u		g		d
	j		m		w	
z		a		r		h
	y		t		o	
n		i		x		v
	f		c		q	
		e		k		

Math Activities

There are a lot of ways to help your child learn number skills during everyday activities around the house or while driving in the car.



Talking with your child about numbers when you see them in books, on packages, or in the store, and counting objects with your child while doing everyday activities are all fun and easy ways to help your child learn number concepts.



Other activities, such as looking at patterns, building with blocks and other materials, and using words like “more”, “less”, “same”, “bigger”, “smaller”, etc. are also good ways to help your child develop early math skills.



Both boys and girls enjoy building things. Be sure to have small building materials like Legos or blocks available for your child to build with. Building helps children build spatial awareness.

Use words like “more”, “less”, “same”, “bigger”, “smaller”, etc. when talking with your child. During daily activities use phrases like “You have the bigger one” or “I have more”. As your child becomes familiar with these concepts, ask your child questions like “Do we have the same amount?” or “Which one is smaller?”.

Make numbers with your child using play dough, pipe cleaners, or Wikki Sticks. While making the numbers, use the name of the number frequently. Say things like “We are making a three” or “We made the number one”. Talk with your child about the shape of the number and then make or count groups of that number. If you made the number four then make four number fours or four balls of play dough, or go around the house counting items to four. You can count four chairs, four bowls, four shoes, etc.

When you go to the store have your child look at the prices with you. Even if you do not use the words dollars or cents, say the numbers out loud with your child.

When doing the laundry, you can have your child help you sort and match clothes, such as socks. Look for patterns on them and talk about which ones are the same and which ones are different.

Count with your child as much as possible. You can count with your child while doing almost any activity.

Around the house you can count with your child when...

- setting the table - count how many people will be eating; how many forks, spoons, plates, cups, etc. will be needed; count the items as you and/or your child put them on the table.
- picking up toys - count toys as you put them in the closet or toy box; count blocks as you put them away; count books as you put them back on the shelf, etc.
- going up or down stairs - count each step as the child steps on it
- getting dressed - count buttons or snaps while fastening them

In the car you can count with your child when

- stopping - count how many times the car stops for traffic lights, stop signs, etc.
- stopped at a traffic light - count with your child from the time you stop until the car starts moving again.
- passing certain objects - when you leave the house decide what object you are going to count that day, then count each one you see while you are driving (or walking) - you can count houses on your block, telephone poles, stop signs, trucks, cars parked in the street, etc.

Take turns when counting with your child. You say “1”, your child says “2”, etc. Help your child keep going if he or she gets stuck. Take turns starting so your child gets to count different numbers. You can count this way by just saying the numbers or by counting objects.

When your child is cleaning up his or her toys or room, you can play counting games by seeing how long it takes your child to finish:

- Begin counting when your child starts putting toys away. Count out loud slowly and steadily until your child is finished. See how long it takes your child to finish. The next time you can see if it took your child “more” or “less” time than it did before.
- See if your child can finish picking up toys before you count to 30 or 50 (any number that is appropriate). Count out loud, slowly and steadily. Praise or reward your child if he or she completes the task before you finish counting.

Play counting and movement games with your child when walking or playing around the house or yard. Have your child take 3 giant steps toward the door, take 4 jumps to the couch, take 5 baby steps to the table, etc.

Let your child help you measure as you cook or bake something. Have your child help you count how many eggs, scoops, or spoonfuls, and use words such as cup, teaspoon, etc.

If you use a microwave to cook or bake, have your child help you find the numbers on the keypad and encourage them to watch the numbers on the display. As the timer gets close to the end, encourage your child to watch the final minutes and seconds. Help your child have a count-down until the timer goes off.

Play counting and sorting games with your child. A fun way to do this is to use small erasers available from the dollar store. Make simple patterns (ball, fruit, ball, fruit, etc.) and work up to harder patterns (ball, ball, fruit, fruit, ball, ball, etc.) or sort them (put all the soccer balls together, etc.). You can also use them as counters to learn adding and subtracting. For example, give your child three erasers. Count them and talk about how many your child has. Then add one or take one away. Count again and talk about how many your child has now. Use phrases like “I gave you one more” or “We took one away” or “Let’s see how many you have now - let’s count them”. Other household items can also be used in the same way (buttons, toy cars, balls, etc.)

Have a “Number of the Day”. Write this number with your child, or make it out of play dough, clay, etc. Talk about what the number looks like, and how many objects are needed to make that number. For example, if the number of the day is four, spend the day seeing how many times you can count “four” of something. Count four chairs, four shows, four blocks, four balls, etc. Also, see how many places you can find the number throughout the day. Look for the number “4” on boxes, packages, signs, license plates, books, TV, etc.

You can work on number identification with
your child by:

- Naming the numbers with your child.
- Asking your child to find a number you name.
- Asking your child to name a number that you point to.

6

11

2

15

17

13

9

14

1

20

4

10

7

18

3

16

19

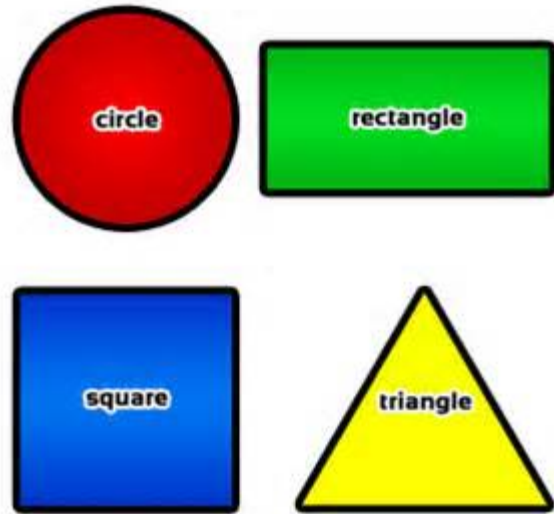
12

8

5

Concept Activities

In addition to learning letters and numbers, there are many other concepts children need to know to be ready for school.



Colors and shapes, fine motor skills, sizes, similarities, differences, and science or weather concepts are just a few of the areas that children need to know about when they come to school.



There are many fun and easy ways that you can help children learn these concepts while playing or completing other daily tasks.

SHAPES

Use the names of shapes when talking to your child. Say things like “Let’s put the triangle shaped blocks away” or “We are having square crackers” or “We are eating round cookies”, etc.

Look for shapes when you are at the grocery store, such as on cans (circles), boxes of cereal (rectangle), etc.

Look at the signs you see while walking or driving down the street or highway. Some are shaped like circles, some like rectangles, some like squares or triangles, etc. Point out the signs and talk about their shapes with your child. Have your child help you look for certain shapes. For example, “Today we are going to look for signs that are triangles”.

Make shapes using play dough, pipe cleaners, or Wikki Sticks (found at Holcomb’s). Talk with your child about the shapes while you are making them. For example, “We are making a circle. It’s round”, or “We made a square. It has straight lines for sides”.

Pick a “Shape of the Day”. Draw it with your child, talk about it by using its name and what it looks like (circles are round, squares have four straight lines for sides and four corners, triangles have three sides, etc.). Have your child trace or draw the shape and cut it out with your child. Spend the day looking for things that are that shape (around the house, while at the store, while in the car, etc.)

COLORS

Use the names of colors daily while talking with your child. Use phrases like “put on your green shirt”, “hand me the blue cup”, “give me the red marker”, etc.

Choose a color for the day and spend the day looking for and talking about things that are that color. You can do this around the house or when you go out. You can draw and color pictures using that color or eat foods that are that color.

Label things in your child’s room or around the house with what color they are. You can write the names on paper the same color or write the names using crayons or markers that are that color. For example, label red objects with either red paper, or with the word written using red. This helps your child begin to recognize what the names of the colors look like in print.

OPPOSITES/SIMILARITIES (SAME/DIFFERENT/ALIKE)

When playing, talk with your child about how toys are the same or different. Talk about which ones are the same size, color, etc. and which ones are different sizes, colors, etc. (ex. “these two balls are red – they are the same”; “this one is different because it is yellow”).

When doing household activities like washing dishes, setting the table, or putting silverware away, have your child sort forks, knives, spoons, plates, etc. Have your child put all the things that are the same together, or sort them based on how they are different.

Read two books with your child then talk about how the stories were the same or different.

Have your child sort stuffed animals or other toys based on how they are the same or different. You can sort toys by color, type of toy (cars, trucks, rabbits), size, use, or even what they are made of (plastic, wood, cardboard).

During clean-up activities, have your child put toys away according to various attributes. Put away all the blue ones first or all the round ones, etc. You can identify the toys to be put away based on color, size, shape, use, etc.

FINE MOTOR

Help your child improve his or her fine motor skills by encourage your child to be more independent when doing things around the house. When getting dressed or undressed have your child try to fasten buttons, snaps, or zippers and when completing other activities, allow your child to try to turn knobs or open jars when it is appropriate.

Sit with your child and allow him or her to use child scissors to cut out shapes, cut along lines, cut out pictures from old magazines or newspapers, etc.

Help your child practice writing his or her name by writing your child's name on paper and then having your child trace or copy it. Remember to write your child's name by making the first letter a capital and the other letters lower case.

After reading with your child ask him or her to draw a picture about what you have just read.

Color with your child and give your child opportunities to play with a variety of writing materials. Give your child paper, crayons, markers, gel pens, etc. to write or draw with.

Work children's puzzles with your child.

SCIENCE

When playing in the sand, give your child different sizes of scoops or containers to allow your child to explore measuring.

Plant a pot of seeds with your child then watch how the seeds grow. Draw pictures or the plants at different stages or take photos and make a "My Plant Book".

Talk about the weather each day with your child. Talk about seasonal changes, how hot or cold it is, and if it is windy, sunny, or cloudy, etc. Talk about how we dress in relation to the weather also (ex. "it is raining today, so we will have to wear a rain coat"; "it is snowing today, so you will have to wear your boots and coat").

Allow your child to play with and explore different types of magnets. Try them on a lot of different things to find out where they will stick or not stick. Talk with your child about what things are made of and why the magnets will or will not stick to them.

The following pages can be used to work on identifying shapes or color words and writing letters with your child.

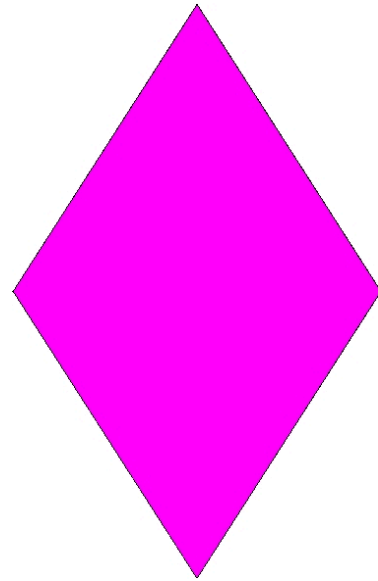
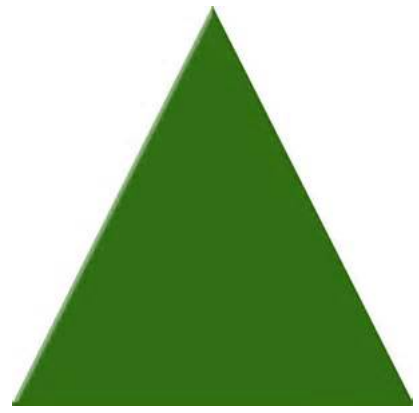
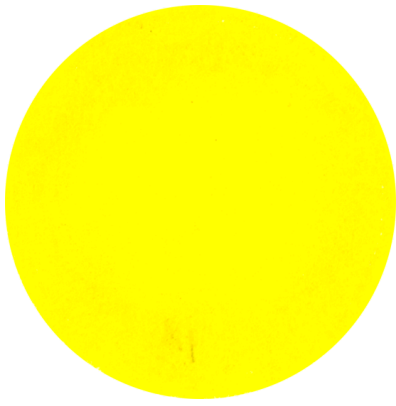
The pictures of the shapes can be used to work on shape identification by:

- naming the shapes with your child
- asking your child to find a shape your name
- asking your child to make a shape that you point to
- making copies of the pages around the house that are the same shape (put circles on things that are circles, etc.)

The color words can be used to work on your child's recognition of color words or for working on color identification by:

- reading the words with your child
- asking your child to find a word you name
- asking your child to read the word that you point to
- talking about what each of the colors are finding things that are that color.
- Coloring the words with their color
- making copies of the pages and cutting the words apart - use the words to label things around the house that are the same color.

The "Write the Alphabet" page can be used to help your child practice writing upper-case and lowercase letters. You can make copies of the page and have your child trace over the letter, or you can use the guide arrows to show your child how to draw the letters.



Red

Blue

Orange

Purple

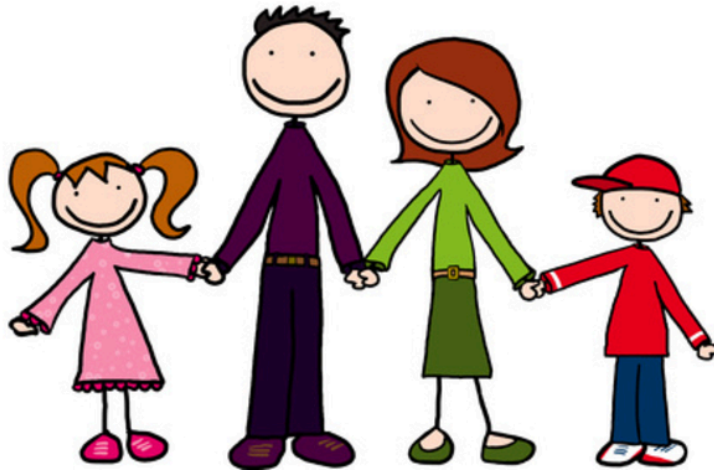
Yellow

Black

Green

Brown

Family Time!



The activities on the following pages contain ideas for other fun activities you can do with your child, as well as other useful information.

Homemade Playdough Recipe

2 cups flour

1 cup salt

5 tbsp. oil

4 tsp cream of tarter

2 cups cold water

food coloring

In a large saucepan combine all ingredients. Place the saucepan over medium heat. Stir and cook for 5 minutes. Mixture will get lumpy, then form a ball. When cooked, knead well. Store in a plastic tub with tight-fitting lid. Last for months!

The oil makes this a very easy-to-work with play dough. After the play dough is cooled, have your child make letters, shapes, and numbers with the play dough.

LEARNING AROUND THE CHILD'S HOUSE!



Cookie Cutter Tracing

Tracing around cookie cutters is excellent for developing fine motor skills. To add a math skill to the activity, have your child count the number of shapes he/she traces and write the numbers inside the shapes.



Salt Writing

Sprinkle a layer of salt on a cookie sheet.

Have your child practice “writing” letters, names, words, or numbers in the salt with his/her finger.

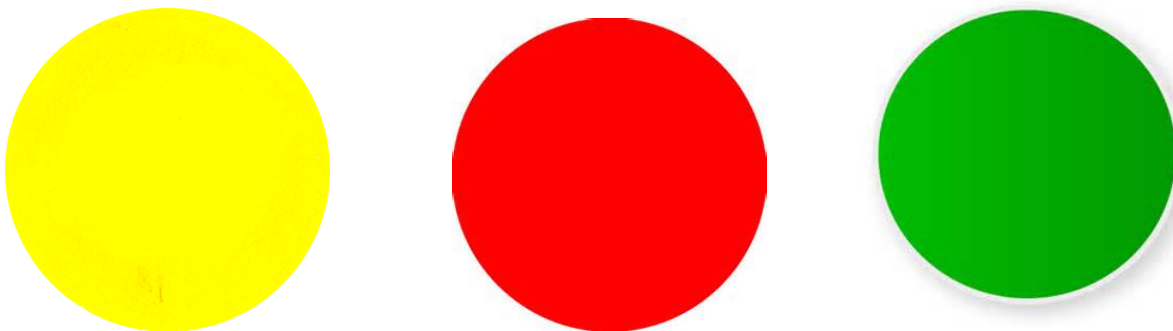
Box Books

Save old cereal or other familiar food box fronts. Punch holes and use string or yarn to fasten them together as a book. You will be amazed at how many familiar words your child will be able to read.



Apple Cookie Patterns

Divide cookie dough into 3 parts and color with red, green and yellow food coloring. Have your child pinch off a small amount and roll in into apple shapes. Arrange them on a cookie sheet in a color pattern. You can flatten them with a fork and bake, or you can just use it for play and then discard it. The game can also be played with play dough if you don't want to use real cookie dough.



Paper Plate Theater

Have your child draw and color a scene on a paper plate. Cut finger holes in the plate. Use a marker to help your child draw faces on his/her fingers. Your child can put his/her fingers through the holes and let the fingers be the “actors” in the play. Your child may want to retell a familiar story or make up a story.



Magnet Games

A metal cookie sheet or the front of your refrigerator makes a great play and learning surface! Some fun activities to do include:

Sort magnets by size, shape or color, make different patterns.

*** You can easily make color or shape magnets with colored paper and sticky-backed magnetic tape.***

Letter and letter-sound picture magnets can be made with cutouts from old magnets.

Sponge Letter

or

Sponge Number Game

A great way to make letter identification fun is to use sponge letters in the bathtub....

Here are some fun activities:

Ask your child to “find a specific letter and float it on a boat or other bathtub toy.”

Choose a specific sponge letter and have your child name the following that begins with that “letter-sound”:

an animal

a friend’s name

a food

Play a math activity where you clap or tap a specific number of times and your child finds that particular sponge number.

Sink or Float?

Have fun experimenting with various “waterproof” items in the bathtub to see if they “sink” or “float”.

Fill a colander with some of the following items and let your child have a good time keeping track of how many sink and how many float:

a key

a top boat

a cork

a spoon

a pencil

a sponge

a bottle cap

a shell

Use your imagination and come up with all kinds of fun things around the house!



Cotton Ball Counting

Picking up cotton balls with tweezers is great for developing fine motor skills!

Various pastel-colored cotton balls can be used for counting, sequencing, addition, and subtraction games.

white, yellow, pink..... white, yellow, pink white, yellow, pink

2 white cotton balls + 3 pink cotton balls = 5 cotton balls