

★ Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

APRIL

READING

Making strong connections

Connecting personally with a book encourages your child to think more deeply about what she reads. Here's a way to help her make thoughtful connections.

Ingredients: *storybook, paper, pencil*

Read the book aloud. Then, have your youngster write this fill-in-the-blank sentence on a sheet of paper: "I _____, so I understand _____." Now take turns filling in the blanks aloud: Put a personal connection in the first blank, and in the second, explain how it helps you understand the story.

For example, your child might say, "I was the new kid in school when we moved last year, so I understand why the main character is nervous about making friends." Then, share your own connection.



MATH

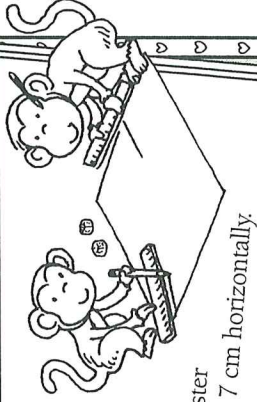
Measurement tag

Tag ... you're it! "Chase" each other on paper in this two-player game that lets your youngster practice measuring.

Ingredients: *two dice, sheet of paper, ruler, pencils*

Have your child roll the dice. Starting in the bottom left corner of the paper, he should use a ruler and pencil to draw a line that length in centimeters (9 cm if he rolled 4 and 5, for instance). The line can zigzag in any direction. Perhaps your youngster will draw his line so that it goes 2 cm diagonally and 7 cm horizontally.

Now you roll and draw, starting your line in the top right corner of the same paper. Continue taking turns. To win, "tag" your opponent by making the end of your line meet his by exact measure.



Refrigerator Poster

Just hang your Recipes poster on the refrigerator and sneak in an activity when you have a few minutes. These fun activities will help develop school success and positive behavior. Check off each box as you complete the "recipe."

SCIENCE

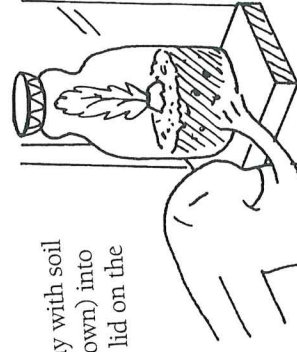
Self-watering carrots

Your youngster can make a terrarium that she only needs to water once—thanks to the water cycle! Here's how:

Ingredients: *soil, wide-mouthed plastic bottle or large clear jar with a lid, tongs, 1-inch carrot top with greens still attached*

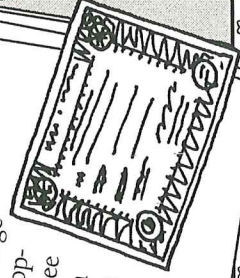
Have your child fill the bottle about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way with soil and use tongs to push the carrot top (cut side down) into the soil. Now she should water the soil, put the lid on the bottle, and place it in a sunny window.

After a few days, your youngster will notice that the greens are growing and the inside of the bottle is damp. That's because water in the soil evaporates (turns to vapor), condenses and cools on the inside of the bottle, and precipitates (rains) on the plant.



HISTORY

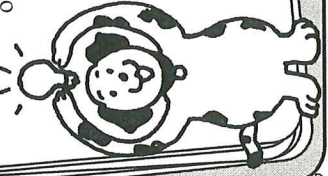
Does your child know that her birth certificate is a historical document? It contains information about the past, born. Together, look at other records (report cards, marriage certificate, pet adoption contract) to see what she can learn about your family's history.



VOCABULARY

Suggest that your youngster make a video dictionary. He could film himself saying and spelling each of his vocabulary words and acting out their definitions.

Encourage him to be creative! He could take a bite of an apple for scrumptious and hold a lightbulb over his head for invent.



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SORTING Classified information

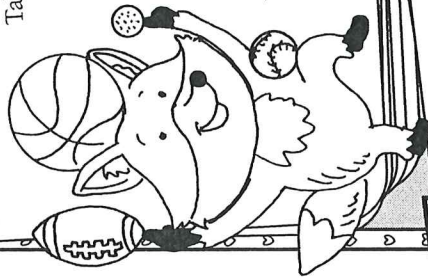
Try this activity to help your youngster practice sorting things and thinking flexibly.

Ingredients: paper, pencils

Ask your child to pick a category, such as food, animals, or sports. Together, write a list of 20 things that fit in it. If he picks sports, he might include baseball, swimming, track, gymnastics, football, basketball, and diving.

Take turns suggesting a way to sort the list and defend your choice. Your youngster may categorize various sports based on whether they use a ball or according to the season they're played in. And you could sort them into water sports and land sports. How many ways can your family think of to sort the list?

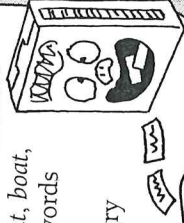
Now pick a new category, and play again.



APRIL

RHYMING

This cereal box monster is hungry! Have your child draw a monster face on a box and cut a hole for its mouth. Then on separate slips of paper, he can write words that rhyme with each of these words: *can, sheep, night, boat, flute*. Tell him which words to "feed" the monster. ("The monster is hungry for words that rhyme with *flute*.")



MUSIC

Let your youngster draw to the beat. Play one slow song and then one fast song. As she listens, she could use a crayon to draw a line that goes up and down based on the song's rhythm. Now have her compare the lines. Does one have more spikes—or steeper spikes—than the other?



Character Corner

FAIRNESS

When your kids each want the last bagel or slice of pizza, let one youngster divide it up—and the other decide who gets which piece. This strategy will probably ensure that each sibling gets her fair share.



LEADERSHIP

Have each family member list five items he would need to survive in the wilderness.



Then, put your child in charge of narrowing the lists down to five items everyone agrees on. He could give each person a turn to talk and suggest compromises.

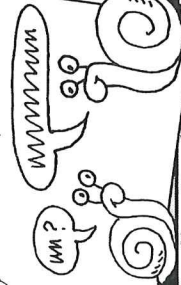
CONTROLLING ANGER

Practice acceptable ways for your youngster to blow off steam when she's feeling angry. She might squeeze a tennis ball as hard as possible, then release. Or she could run in place for 10 seconds.



SPEAKING

Show your child how expanding on answers to yes-or-no questions can keep a conversation going. Ask him a question like, "Are you in third grade?" After he answers, "Are you in another piece of information. ("Yes, Mrs. Melbourne is my teacher.") Now respond to his statement to continue the discussion.



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

PLACE VALUE

Ask your child to draw a target with four rings labeled with place values:

"Thousands," "Hundreds," "Tens," "Ones." Take turns tossing five pennies onto the target and using the place values to get your score. If 2 pennies land in the thousands ring and 1 lands in the tens, you earn 2,010 points (because $2,000 + 10 = 2,010$). High score after 10 rounds wins.

