

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

MARCH 2013

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 Don't Pop the Balloon

Can your child stick a pin in a balloon without popping it? Let her experiment to find out.

Ingredients: balloons, pins, petroleum jelly, dish soap, vegetable oil, cellophane tape, other household materials

Blow up some balloons (not too full), and knot them. Ask your youngster, "How could we keep a balloon from popping if we stick it with a pin?" Let her try using the materials—and anything else she can think of—to see what works.

For example, she might coat a pin with dish soap or hold a balloon underwater. Suggest that she experiment with poking through tape and with putting in the pin at various points on the balloon (top, bottom, sides). She could stick the pin right in or try twisting it slowly as she inserts it. What does she find out?



READING Beginnings, Middles, and Ends

To win this game, your child will need to look closely at words in books. In the process, he'll practice phonics and spelling.

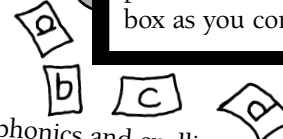
Ingredients: paper, pencil, bag, books

Have your youngster write each letter of the alphabet on separate slips of paper and shake them in a bag.

To play, the first person chooses a slip and says the letter aloud. Then, he has to flip through any book to find a word that begins with the letter, a word that ends with it, and a word with the letter in the middle. *Example:* Draw a *t*, and read *toes*, *cat*, and *little*.

Continue playing until all the letters have been drawn. Score a point for each word. The player with the most points wins.

Variation: For older players, score 1 point for a 1-syllable word, 2 points for a 2-syllable word, and so on.



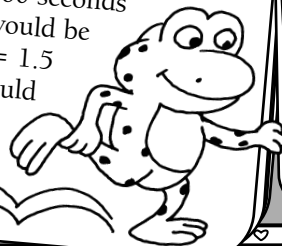
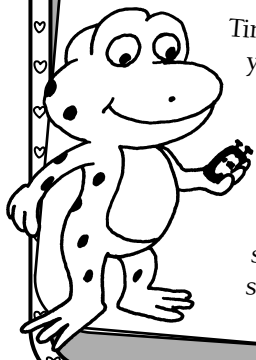
TIME Hop Along!

This activity will help your youngster get exercise as she builds math skills.

Ingredients: timer (stopwatch, cell phone, watch with second hand), paper, pencil

Create funny race challenges for each other, and time the results. For instance, your child might say, "Take three hops on your left foot and three hops on your right foot all the way across the room. Return by walking backward."

Time each person as she completes the challenge. Then, help your youngster convert seconds to minutes or minutes to seconds for each player. (*Hint:* Make sure she knows 60 seconds = 1 minute.) For instance, 90 seconds would be $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes ($90 \text{ seconds} \div 60 \text{ seconds} = 1.5$ minutes). And 2 minutes 45 seconds would be 165 seconds ($2 \times 60 \text{ seconds} = 120 \text{ seconds}$, and $120 \text{ seconds} + 45 \text{ seconds} = 165 \text{ seconds}$).



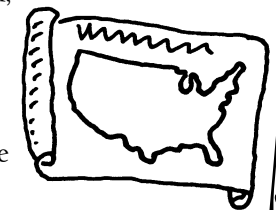
MUSIC

Let your child make his own kazoo. He can cover one end of a toilet paper tube with waxed paper and secure it with a rubber band. Help him use a pencil to poke a hole in the tube an inch from the covered end. To play his kazoo, he should hum into the open end. What happens if he puts his finger on the hole?



GEOGRAPHY

Write the name of a state on a piece of paper, and pass it to your youngster. Have her add a different state and hand the paper back to you. Can you keep going until all 50 states are listed? For an extra challenge, write the state capitals, too.



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Character Corner

HISTORY Great Inventions

Your youngster can investigate the past by researching the history of everyday objects.

Ingredients: household items, paper, pencil, Internet access or library books

Have your child choose five things in his room and write the name of each one on a separate index card. Examples: Monopoly game, teddy bear, comb. Then, ask him to arrange the slips in the order he thinks the objects were invented.

To check, he can research the items using the Internet or books. He could write the name of the inventor and the year the object was invented on the back of each card. Then, let him choose new items and try again.



CREATIVITY

Spark your child's creativity with this thinking project. Ask her to create a device that will launch a cotton ball across the room. For instance, she might use objects like a spoon, a rubber band, a toy car, or a straw. How far can she make the cotton ball fly? (She could use a tape measure or ruler to find out.)



READING

Encourage your youngster to give library books a place of honor by creating a storage spot for them. He could cover a box with construction paper and use markers to draw pictures of favorite characters or settings. Suggest that he keep a notepad and pencil in his box for listing books he has read and ones he wants to check out next.



WRITING

Ask your child to write a pretend classified ad to sell a toy. First, have her read classified ads in the newspaper for ideas. Point out that she should use as few words as possible to get her message across. Example: "Scooter for sale. Like new."



HUMOR

Help your youngster see the lighter side of life. Every Friday, have each family member share something funny from her week. It might be a joke she heard or a silly mistake she made. Having a good laugh together is healthy for everyone!



KINDNESS

Ask your child to write "Kindness Token" on a milk cap. When he sees a family member doing something nice, he gives that person the token. Then, the token-holder watches for another kind deed and passes on the milk cap. The object is not to hold the cap longer than a day.



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Have a "Meet Me Halfway Day." You and your youngster can each list three changes you'd like and then try to reach a compromise. Say she wants to stay up later, and you want her to read more. You might agree to a slightly later bedtime if she spends the extra time reading.



MATH

When your child has word problems for math homework, suggest that he hunt for clues that tell him what operation to do (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division). For instance, "how many more" is a clue to add, and "fewer" indicates subtraction. How many clue words can he come up with?



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)