

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

CCBOE Parent Involvement Specialist

Becky Cox 256-741-7421

OCTOBER 2012

READING Collectible Clippings

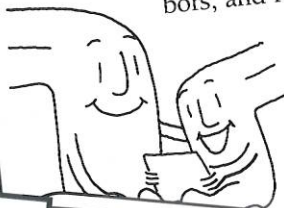
Encourage your child to start a reading collection with this activity.

Ingredients: large envelope, crayons, newspapers, magazines, scissors, computer (optional)

Begin by having your youngster use crayons to decorate a large envelope with pictures of his favorite topics (sports, animals). Then, he can find articles about the topics in newspapers or magazines or online. Help him cut or print them out and put them in the envelope. Suggest that he ask friends, neighbors, and relatives to save or email articles for him, too.

Then, ask him to read something from his collection to you each night.

Variation: Let a younger child cut pictures from magazines. Help him write the names of the items on the pictures and tell you a story about them.



SCIENCE Super Paratrooper

Explore how parachutes work by making a miniature one.

Ingredients: string, yardstick or tape measure, scissors, key, plastic bag

Have your youngster measure and cut a 2-foot piece of string. Let her tie the key in the center of the string (to represent a person using the parachute). Then, she can tie each end of the string to the handles of the bag.

To fly her parachute, help her hold the bag upside down and drop it from a high place (staircase, balcony). The parachute "catches" air inside, which slows down its fall. What happens if your child removes the key and drops the parachute again?



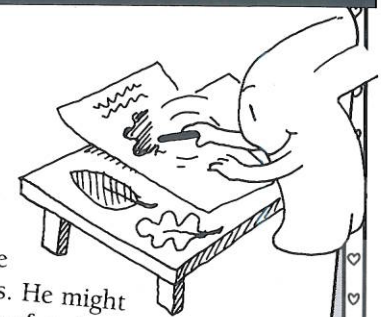
POETRY Leaf Haiku

Your youngster can welcome autumn and practice writing poetry with this creative project.

Ingredients: paper, pencil, leaves, crayons

Encourage your child to write a haiku about leaves. A haiku is a three-line Japanese poem, often about nature. Lines one and three each have five syllables. Line two has seven syllables.

First, have him take a nature walk for inspiration. He can look at leaves on the trees and collect fallen ones. He might think about the colors, or what autumn reminds him of, as he writes his haiku. When he finishes, he could illustrate his poem with a leaf rubbing. Have him lay leaves on a table, cover them with a piece of paper, and lightly rub with the side of a crayon. Hang the haiku and leaf rubbing on the refrigerator as a fall decoration.



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."

GEOMETRY

Show your youngster what a right angle looks like. Hint: A capital "L" makes a right angle. Then, ask her to search for right angles in your house. She can make a list of all the ones she finds. Or she could challenge a sibling or another family member to a right-angle hunt!



VOCABULARY

When you and your child are waiting in line, try this vocabulary-building game. Take turns thinking of homophones (words that sound the same but have different meanings). Examples: one/won, break/brake, sea/see. How many can you both come up with?



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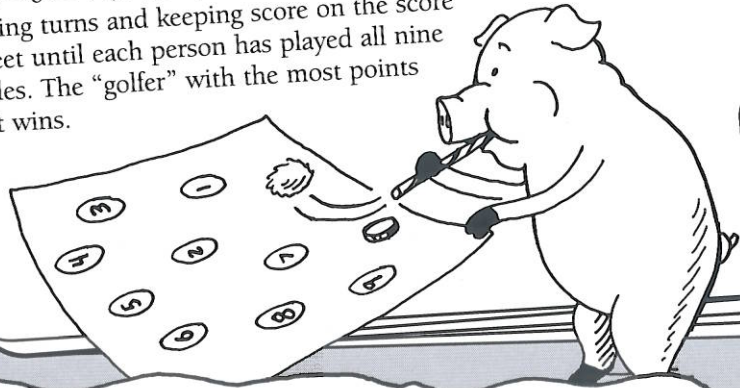
MATH Puff-Puff Golf

Play tabletop golf to help your child practice subtraction.

Ingredients: quarter, pencil, poster board, cotton balls, straws, paper

Have your youngster use a quarter to trace nine "holes" at random spots on the poster board. Then, she can number the circles 1-9. Place the poster board on a table or the floor, and use the quarter as the tee.

Each player starts with 50 points. On her turn, she sets a cotton ball on the tee and uses a straw to blow it to the first hole. Have her count how many puffs it takes (say, 6) and subtract the number from her score ($50 - 6 = 44$). Then, the next person plays the first hole. Continue taking turns and keeping score on the score sheet until each person has played all nine holes. The "golfer" with the most points left wins.



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

OCTOBER 2012

READING

Audiobooks let your youngster explore more difficult books than she might normally read. At the library, have her choose a couple to listen to in the car or at bedtime. Check out the book versions, too, so she can read along.



GEOGRAPHY

Say the name of a country, and ask your child to name another country that starts with its last letter. Example: You say, "Canada," and he says, "Austria." Take turns until you run out of countries. Then, try states.



MUSIC

With your youngster, make up dances to go with different styles of music. Listen to the rhythms, and talk about them. Does the music make you want to dance fast or slow? Does it sound like a happy song or a sad one?



Character Corner

APPRECIATION

Help your child make up "appreciation statements" for people he knows. ("My dad is the best chef!") Let him write them on paper stars. Then, he can hang the stars from pieces of yarn tied to a hanger to make a mobile of the "stars" in his life.



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

When your youngster has a conflict with a friend, help her make a case for the other side. If her friend picks someone else to be her science partner in class, she might think, "I was Erica's partner last time. She probably just wants to be nice and ask Mary this time." Considering the other person's feelings may help your child understand the situation better.



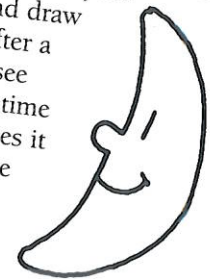
FAMILY UNITY

Declare one day this month as "Family Day." On that date, gather everyone in the kitchen to help put together a favorite family meal. Follow it up by looking through photos, watching home movies, or telling family stories.



ASTRONOMY

Each night before bedtime, have your child look at the moon and draw its shape on a calendar. After a couple of weeks, she will see how the moon changes as time passes. How many days does it take for the moon to change from a crescent to a full circle?



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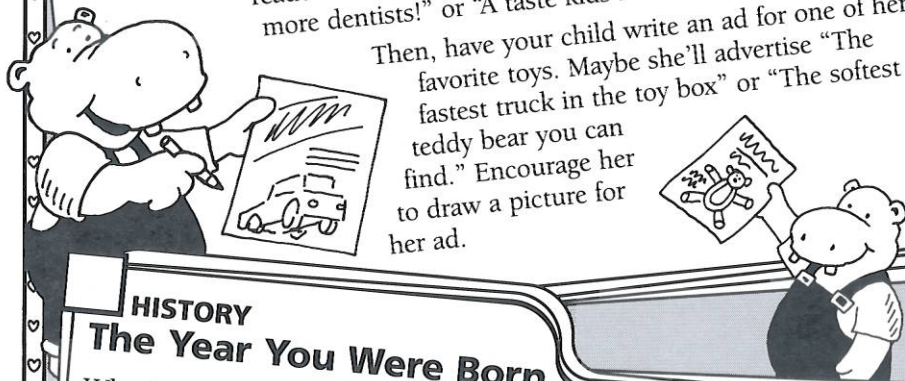
NOVEMBER 2012

WRITING Words That Persuade

Your child can practice persuasive writing by creating an advertisement for a favorite item.

Ingredients: magazines, pencil, paper, crayons
Have your youngster look through magazines for ads that catch her attention. Go over the ads together, and ask her which words and phrases might persuade readers to buy the products. Examples: "Recommended by more dentists!" or "A taste kids love."

Then, have your child write an ad for one of her favorite toys. Maybe she'll advertise "The fastest truck in the toy box" or "The softest teddy bear you can find." Encourage her to draw a picture for her ad.

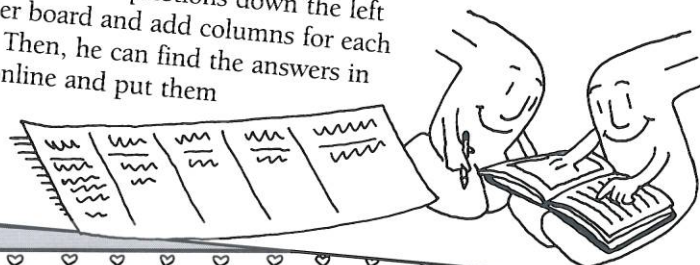


HISTORY The Year You Were Born

What happened the year each member of your family was born? With this project, your youngster will learn some history and build research skills.

Ingredients: poster board, markers, almanac or computer with Internet access
Together, come up with five things to learn about the year of each person's birth. Examples: Who was president? What was the most popular song? Who won the Super Bowl?

Have your child write the questions down the left side of the poster board and add columns for each family member. Then, he can find the answers in an almanac or online and put them on the chart.



MATH Measuring Liquids

Here's a fun way for your youngster to measure liquids.

Ingredients: 3 same-size glasses, measuring cup, water, 3 different-size glass containers (jars, vases)

Help your child measure $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water into the first glass, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup in the second, and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup into the third. How much water needs to be added to the first glass to make it equal the second glass? ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup, because $\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} = \frac{1}{2}$.)

Then, have her look away while you pour 1 cup of water into each container. Ask her which one has the most and the least water. Have her use the measuring cup to check. She will see that 1 cup looks different depending on the container's size and shape.



Refrigerator Poster

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READING

Have your child use the index of a cookbook to find three recipes made with autumn foods like pumpkin, cranberries, and turkey. Let him pick a recipe to make together. He can read the instructions out loud as you cook.



CREATIVITY

Let your youngster create a wind chime from household items. Help her gather metal objects (keys, washers, old forks) and tie a piece of string to each. Then, poke holes around the edge of a plastic lid. She can put the strings through the holes and knot them. Finally, hang the chime outside to hear the sounds it makes!



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READING Syllable Seekers

Your youngsters can explore syllables with a word hunt.

Ingredients: newspaper, paper, pencils

First, give each player a set of instructions for finding words with a certain number of syllables. For example, you might say, "Find two 1-syllable words, four 2-syllable words, three 3-syllable words, and one 4-syllable word."

Then, everyone gets a section of the newspaper. On the count of three, players follow the instructions and write down their own sets of words. A complete list might include: *a, the, mission, even, hearing, public, yesterday, stabilize, generate, technology*. The first player to finish wins.

Variation: Let younger players search for fewer words or shorter words (three 1-syllable words and three 2-syllable words, for example).



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NOVEMBER 2012

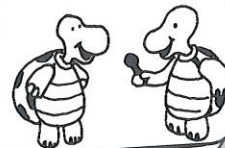
FITNESS

Have your youngster take an activity break during homework. Set a timer to go off halfway through homework time (if he normally works for 30 minutes, set it for 15). When the timer goes off, he might walk up and down the stairs a few times or do 10 push-ups. The movement will keep his mind and body active.



INTERVIEWING

Suggest that your child think of one question to ask your family each week ("What is your favorite season, and why?" "Where would you like to travel?"). Encourage her to interview family members and record their answers in a notebook. Then, she can report on what she finds.



VOCABULARY

Name an adjective (a describing word) that your youngster might not use every day. *Examples: gigantic, bubbly, shimmering.* Have him choose something he sees that the adjective could describe, such as "a gigantic building." Take turns naming adjectives and finding objects to go with them.



Character Corner

☐ CITIZENSHIP

Together, brainstorm a list of traffic laws (stop at red lights, obey speed limits). Talk about how those laws make driving safer for everyone. Ask your child to think of some rules you have at home that make things safer for your family (don't go online without adult supervision, always lock the front door).



☐ PERSEVERANCE

Does your youngster ever find it tough to stick to a goal? If so, help him reach one. *Examples:* building a model airplane, running a mile. Have him map out the steps and pick a deadline to shoot for. Be sure to celebrate once the goal is met!



☐ COOPERATION

Turn a crossword puzzle into a family challenge. One person can be in charge of reading the clues while another fills in everyone's answers. Have someone else look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary and read the definitions aloud.



ADDITION

Ask your child how she would make 50 cents using the least number of coins (1 half-dollar). The most? (50 pennies). Encourage her to think of other ways to make 50 cents (5 dimes; 3 dimes and 4 nickels). Then, give her a different amount (\$1.37, \$1.82). *Variation:* For younger children, get a handful of change. They can use the coins to find all the possible combinations.



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DECEMBER 2012

READING Story Search

Turn story time into game time with your youngster.

Ingredients: storybook, paper, pencils, old magazines or catalogs

Together, choose a story to read aloud. While you read, have her write a list of five items or animals mentioned in the story (without letting you see what she is writing). Next, ask her to read the story to you while you list five things.

Then, exchange lists and go on a scavenger hunt through your home to find the items. If you can't find an object, hunt for a picture of it in old magazines or catalogs. The first person to find all five items on her list wins. *Variations:* Have each player read a different book or list more items.



AVERAGES

Ask your child to add together the shoe sizes of all family members. Then, she can divide the total by the number of people. The answer is your family's average shoe size.

Example: $11 + 8 + 4 + 3 + 1 = 27$; $27 \div 5 = 5.4$. Let her figure out what the average would be if she and her siblings each went up one size.



STUDY SKILLS

Graded homework assignments make great study sheets. Suggest that your youngster save returned homework in a folder. Before a test, he can use the papers to review. Have him find any wrong answers and look up the correct ones in his notes or textbooks.



MATH Me and My Shadow

Your child can explore math with this measurement and graphing activity.

Ingredients: yardstick or measuring tape, paper, pencil, graph paper

On a sunny day, pick a spot outside. Let your youngster measure the length of your shadow at three different times, such as morning, midday, and late afternoon, and write the measurements on a sheet of paper.

Then, help him create a graph by labeling the left side of a piece of graph paper with measurements and the bottom with the times of day. Show him how to make bars to show his measurements by coloring graph squares. At what time is the shadow the longest? The shortest?



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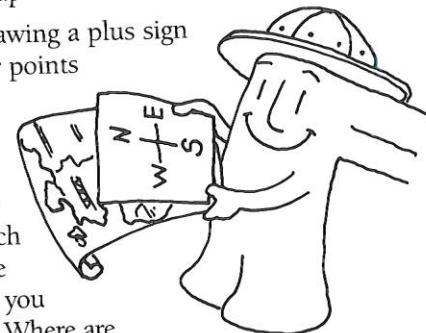
GEOGRAPHY Where Am I?

Map out some fun with this hide-and-seek geography game.

Ingredients: pencil, index card, world map

Help your child make a compass by drawing a plus sign on the index card and labeling the four points north, south, east, and west. Lay the card so that "north" points toward the top of the map.

Tell your youngster to "hide" in a continent or an ocean, and let her know which continent or ocean you're in. Then, have her give you compass directions to help you find her. You might say, "I'm in Europe. Where are you?" If she is in Africa, she would answer, "I'm south of Europe." Continue asking her questions to narrow the search, such as "Which ocean is to the west of you?" Next, trade roles and let her ask questions while you give directions.



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DECEMBER 2012

Character Corner

LOGIC

Descriptionary

Play this guessing game to help your child sharpen his logical-thinking skills.

Ingredients: pencils, paper

Think of an object for your youngster to guess. Write down clues that describe the item. For example, if you choose a beach ball, you could use "toy," "round," and "water," but not "beach" or "ball."

Give the clues to your child, one at a time, to help him name your item. Examples: "My object is a toy." "It's round." "You play with it in the water." The

catch? Don't say any words that are part of its name. Continue giving clues until he guesses the correct object. Then, let him think of an item and make up clues for you.



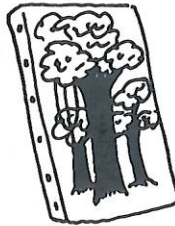
SCIENCE

Does salt water freeze? Have your youngster find out by filling two cups halfway with water. Let her add 1 tbsp. salt to one and put them both in the freezer. After an hour, have her compare the two cups. Did the water in both cups freeze?



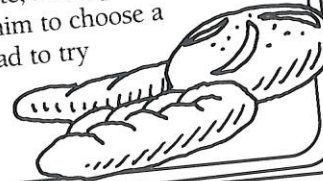
VIRTUAL ART

Paint a jungle, build a virtual sculpture, or create an online collage. These are all activities your youngster can do at the National Gallery of Art Kids website (nga.gov/kids). *Idea:* Visit an art museum together to discover various art styles and learn more about artists.



SOCIAL STUDIES

People all over the world eat many kinds of bread. Have your child look for different breads in the grocery store. How many can he find? Examples: baguette, naan, pita, tortilla. Then, ask him to choose a type of bread to try at home.



PATIENCE

Does waiting = impatience for your child? Ask her to list situations where she needs to be patient (in the dentist's waiting room, while you're making dinner). Then, have her think of ways she can entertain herself (reading, playing catch). *Idea:* Have her set a timer so she can visualize the time passing.



RESPECT

Help your youngster learn to show respect for the opposite gender. Around town or in books, look for women and men in traditional and nontraditional roles (stay-at-home mothers and male firefighters, female pilots and male nurses). He will see that boys and girls can choose jobs based on their interests—not their genders.

HELPFULNESS

Ask your youngster to brainstorm ways she can be helpful. Examples: Read to a younger child, help unpack groceries, tidy up the family room. Suggest that she pick one to do each day.



READING

Boost your youngster's reading comprehension by having him compare two characters from separate books. Encourage him to think of three ways the characters are alike and three ways they are different. What if the characters swapped stories? How would the stories change?



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