

PLAY & LEARN AT HOME

JUNE 2020

EASY LITERACY AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO TRY AT HOME WITH LITTLE ONES

LEARNING ON THE GO



Reading and sharing stories is the best way to help your child build early literacy (or pre-reading) skills. You can also make the stories even more engaging by having a conversation about the book! This will also grow language skills and vocabulary.

Point out things in the pictures your **baby** is noticing and give them names. Ask your **toddler** questions about what they see and expand on what they say. (“Yes, it’s a car! A red sports car!”)

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Open-ended question can’t be answered with one word and are great to engage with your **preschooler**.

“Why do you think the character feels that way?”

“What do you think will happen next?”

“I wonder why they decided to do that?”

Most importantly, HAVE FUN!

FAMILY PLACE

In addition to daily reading, experts agree that children learn best through play. And isn’t that convenient? Children are really good at playing! One thing that can make play even more impactful is a “**Serve and Return**” interaction. All this means is responding to your child’s attempts to communicate and to keep the conversation going back and forth.

With a **baby**, respond to coos, wriggles or babbling: “Well, I am glad to see you too! And what should we do today?”

With **older children**, conversation can be extended and more complex. Use serve and return conversations anytime.

Try making homemade playdough, tune in to your child and see where the conversation leads!



HOMEMADE PLAY DOUGH

INGREDIENTS

2 CUPS OF FLOUR
1 CUP OF SALT
1 CUP OF WARM WATER
2 TBS OF VEGETABLE OIL
1 TSP OF FOOD COLORING

DIRECTIONS

1 - MIX FLOUR AND SALT
2 - MIX FOOD COLORING, OIL AND WATER
3 - ADD LIQUID TO DRY INGREDIENTS - MIX WELL

LITTLE EXPLORERS

STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) is *everywhere* – even in your home! Grab any box or bin big enough to fit several items so your little ones can create! Try using everyday objects like cotton balls, Q-Tips, balls, toilet paper or paper towel rolls, and blocks. Encourage your little one to build or create with the objects in the bin. You'll be surprised how long this type of engineering activity can last!



Try asking open-ended questions and remember not to assume you know what they're creating. Use **"I notice"** or **"I wonder"** statements and let them decide the next move.

- "I wonder what would happen if we tried..." or
- "I notice lots of cotton balls on top! What if..."

CHANGE IT UP!

Go around your home together to create a new bin! This simple child-directed activity encourages the child that they are creating something unique and fun.

READY, SET, KINDERGARTEN!

GET THOSE BODIES MOVING!

When kids move, they use more of their brains and can retain more information. Gross (large) motor skills are tuned with large body movements. These skills are needed for balance, coordination, throwing, catching and spatial awareness. Plus, it's fun to be active!

Baby tummy time with older sibling



Family Yoga



Ways to Develop Large Motor Skills:

- Roll or toss a ball back and forth. Use a balled-up pair of socks or a stuffed animal for variety.
- Find ways to get bodies moving (running, jumping, marching, spinning, etc.) and write them on cards. Draw a card at random and let your child perform the activity. **Bonus:** Use dice and roll to see how many times they should perform each movement.
- Do Yoga poses to strengthen core muscles.
- Tummy time for babies! Place a mirror (non-breakable) in front of them or put a toy just out of reach.
- Clean the house. Dusting, sweeping and cleaning windows all require their bodies to work.
- Let them give you lots of hugs! Not only do they feel more secure, but their arms will get stronger.
- Be silly! Name animals and ask your child to pretend to walk like them.
- Try wall pushups. A good vertical pushup against a wall can get out the wiggles.