

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

MARCH 2021

READING On a mission

Send your youngster on a quest to practice "active reading," an important strategy for boosting comprehension.

Ingredients: reading materials

Let your child select a book or an article. Before he starts reading, look it over to find something specific he could watch for. For a nonfiction book about cats, perhaps you'll send him on a mission to discover three ways house cats are similar to big cats (lions, tigers).

After he finishes the book, he can come back to you with the information. Then, ask him to make up his own mission for the next thing he reads. Or maybe he'll give you a mission when you read the newspaper or your novel tonight!



HEALTH Be a food critic

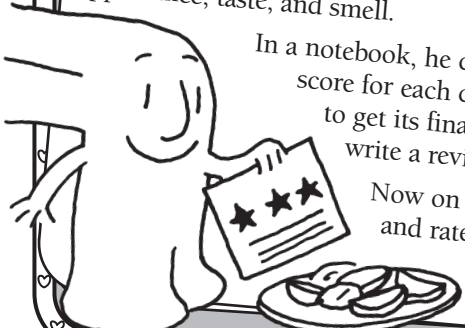
Inspire your youngster to try new foods—and think critically—by letting him play food critic.

Ingredients: foods, paper, pencil

Put out a sample of a food he's never had, perhaps tuna casserole or mango. Ask him to rate the food on a scale of 1 to 5 stars in different categories, such as appearance, taste, and smell.

In a notebook, he could write the name of the food and his score for each category. Have him add up each food's stars to get its final score. *Idea:* He might even want to write a review to share with you.

Now on to the next new food for him to try—and rate!



MATH Rock, paper, math facts!

How many fingers are you holding up?

Put a twist on "rock, paper, scissors" to help your child review multiplication facts and get used to doing math in her head.

Ingredients: two players

On the count of three, both players raise one or both hands and hold up any number of fingers they choose. For instance, one player might hold up two fingers and the other may hold up seven. Players should multiply the numbers together ($2 \times 7 = 14$). The first person to shout the correct answer gets a point. Score 21 points to win.

Variations: Younger children could add rather than multiply the numbers. Or to make the game harder, bend a finger at the knuckle to represent $\frac{1}{2}$ ($2\frac{1}{2} \times 7 = 17\frac{1}{2}$).



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."

STORYTELLING

Encourage your child to turn a picture into a story. Each of you can draw an object, such as a flying car or a house shaped like a cake. Swap drawings, and ask her to tell a story based on your illustration ("Jane drove a flying car. It had a mind of its own ..."). Next, make up a tale for her drawing.



NATURE

Suggest that your youngster start a spring nature journal. Together, spend time outdoors to observe plants and animals. He could sketch and label what he sees (a robin, yellow flowers) and include the date and location. What does he notice if he returns to the same place tomorrow or in a week?



Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

GEOGRAPHY Countries in a box

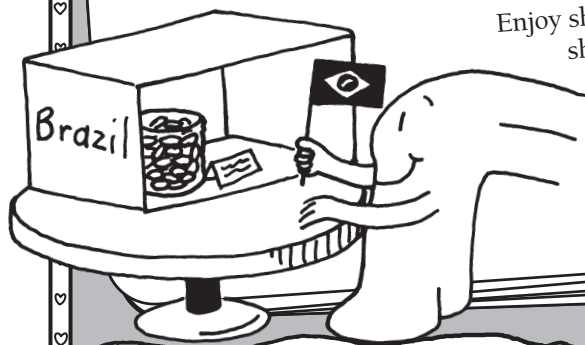
Collecting items that represent countries around the world gives your child a chance to explore geography.

Ingredients: shoebox, construction paper, crayons

What country intrigues your youngster? Perhaps she'd like to visit Brazil to see its rain forests. She could read about Brazil in library books or online and look up other features, such as its flag, language, or crops.

Now she can make her research come to life with a shoebox display. She might make a Brazilian flag from construction paper, write words in Portuguese, and include coffee beans to represent one of the country's biggest crops.

Enjoy show-and-tell as she shares her shoebox with you. Then, suggest that she create a box for another country!



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

MARCH 2021

ORGANIZATION

Ask your youngster to stuff a backpack so it's messy. He might include folders, pencils, erasers, and food wrappers. Add mystery items like small toys. Give him a list of things to find, and time him. Now have him repack the backpack in an organized way and try again. Was he faster or slower this time?



SPELLING

Suggest your child make a code to practice spelling. Perhaps she'll draw an emoji, symbol, or animal to represent each letter of the alphabet (examples: boat = B, teacup = T). Take turns writing words in her code for each other to figure out.



INTERVIEWING

Together, read a short interview in a magazine, perhaps of a famous scientist or actor. Encourage your youngster to think of follow-up questions the writer could have asked to get more information. Now pretend you're a famous person while she tries her hand at interviewing you!



Character Corner

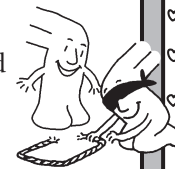
☐ HONESTY

Does your child realize one lie can lead to another? Demonstrate by acting out a scene. Pretend he took a game without asking. Ask "Have you seen my game?" If he says "No," ask if he saw someone using it. Is he tempted to lie again?



☐ TEAMWORK

Blindfold your youngster, and hand her about 3 feet of string. Give her directions for forming a square on the floor with the string. Examples: "Make a straight line. Stop. Turn 90 degrees." Trade roles—maybe she'll direct you to form a hexagon!



☐ GRIT

Challenge each family member to choose one difficult thing to attempt. Maybe your child wants to improve his soccer dribbling skills. After a month, share your progress, and explain how you kept going if you felt discouraged.



COIN VALUES

Let your child divide up a handful of change so you each have the same number of coins. Then, take turns suggesting trades. For instance, he might ask to trade 1 quarter, 2 nickels, and 1 penny for 3 dimes, 1 nickel, and 1 penny. Is that a fair trade? (Yes, because you each have 36 cents.)

