

Fun Family Activities That Build a Love of Learning:

Joyful Family Learning is the Best Preparation for Kindergarten Success

(Titles in parentheses are found under the *ABC Phonics* tab on our website, www.nellieedge.com.)

- **Sing together everyday.** Teach your child some of your favorite family songs. Memorizing simple, traditional folk songs is still one of the most delightful ways we have to develop language and literacy skills.
- **Enjoy memorizing many nursery rhymes** to develop a sensitivity to the sounds of language. Reciting rhyming words will help your child with important reading skills. (See enclosed packet)
- **Visit the library weekly** and help your child select picture books to read. Set aside 20 minutes each night to read and enjoy books together. Include some from the list of favorite predictable books and "Books that Sing and Rhyme." Your child may begin to chime in on the words and engage in "magical memory reading." (Search *Predictable Books That Children Love to Read* at nellieedge.com.)
- **Listen to your child talk about what interests him. Ask questions.**
- **Talk to your child about what it was like when you were five years old:** Where did you live and what did you like to do? Did you go to kindergarten? What are some of your best memories?
- **Create a simple art/writing area for your child at home:** a place where they can draw and write, color, cut, paste and create.
- **Teach your child to print their name efficiently** according to the Name Ticket you were given. Keep this activity short and positive. It is important for your child to learn how to print their name correctly. Ask him to point to and name each letter after he practices writing his name.
- **Take evening walks and notice the stars and the moon.** What do you wonder about the stars? Enjoy singing the familiar song, *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*, together.
- **Walk around your child's new school.** Notice the trees, street signs, nearby houses, and the playground.
- **Listen and watch for local birds.** See if your child can spot a blue bird, robin, sparrow and hummingbird. Talk, read and learn about local birds.
- **Teach your child to handjive** (patti-cake style), skip, jump rope and/or march to the steady beat of a song. A good sense of rhythm supports not only coordination for athletics, but reading development.
- **Take a city bus or a train ride.** Talk about what you see and hear. Did you notice any signs? Maybe the experience will remind you of the song *The Wheels on the Bus*.
- **Make favorite picture books come alive through connections to real experience:** e.g., feed some local ducks and then read *Make Way for Ducklings* by Robert McCloskey.

- **Explore a different park each week** (find great swings and climbers), or take a walk around a part of town that is new to you. Talk about what you see. Notice environmental print such as stop signs. Take pictures of signs and make them into a simple book for your child to read.
- **Spend a day at the closest children's museum or marine science center.**
- **Look for wildflowers along the roadside — or flowers in your garden.** Learn the names of them and take pictures.
- **Encourage your child to be a storyteller.** Keep a storytelling clipboard with paper and pen handy so that you can take dictation from your child. Then point to the words as you read the story back to her. Invite your child to illustrate their story or experience. Keep the ongoing collection of stories and illustrations in a special notebook.
- **Cook together** - what a delicious way to learn! (Download free picture recipes under *Nellie Edge's Teachers Pay Teachers (TpT) Store.*)
- **Notice letters and words in environmental print:** on cereal boxes, cans of food, buildings, signs and favorite restaurants and stores. Are some of those letters in your child's name? Let your child point out letters he already knows.
- **Plant a garden together.** Read about seeds and plants and watch the garden grow. Keep a plant journal. Draw pictures and/or write about what is happening.
- **Teach your child how to sign the ABCs** - Enclosed is the parent guide for *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* Enjoy the complimentary American Sign Language instruction videos on the *ABC Phonics* tab at www.nellieedge.com. This is a great family activity.
- **Pick one special interest that your child has,** and each month make that topic a fun family learning project to research, observe, read about, see videos on, etc. Cats? Spiders? Snakes? Dinosaurs? Encourage your child to become an expert on a topic and invite them to share their "expertise."
- **Tell silly jokes to each other.** Teach your child at least one "knock, knock - who's there?" joke that she can tell Grandma or the neighbors — and later — their new friends at school.
- **Encourage your child to draw a special picture of the whole family** (including their hamster and dog!) for their new kindergarten teacher. Label each family member.
- **Walk in the rain.** Step in mud puddles, laugh: enjoy moments of serendipity with your child. Celebrate childhood.

Keep these family activities enjoyable for your child.

Remember — above all — we want to develop a love of learning.

"We have a covenant that says we jointly share responsibility for teaching your child."

— Earnest Boyer