

Literacy Activities for students that will be entering Kindergarten

Young children learn best when they are actively involved. As they play, explore, experiment, and interact with people and objects, children are always trying to make sense of those experiences. Children under age 7 are most comfortable in the concrete world they see, smell, hear, taste, and touch. Below are games and activities you can use to help build the foundational skills necessary for a child to become a good reader.

Colors & Shapes

Colors and shapes are two very noticeable features of the world around us. When we look around, our minds are noticing green trees, square windows, and blue skies. Colors and shapes encourage children to identify, define, sort and categorize what they see. (See shape activities on *Math Activities* handout.)

- Name the colors around you and your child as you engage in everyday activities - going to the grocery store, playing with clay, drawing with crayons, clothing, etc.
- Learn about colors through children's books. Eric Carle's "*Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See*" is a great example. This website address has a great list of children's books to teach colors: <http://childrensbooksguide.com/color>
- Games: Candyland, color matching memory games, Hot Dots Jr. Cards, color dominoes, color flashcards, Goodie Games Color Cookies

Phonemic Awareness

Our spoken language is made up of small units of sounds (phonemes). The ability to hear and manipulate the sounds is essential to learning to read. A child's level of phonemic awareness is a strong determinant of future reading success.

Whole Word Discrimination (Are these words the same?)

Rhyme Recognition (Do these words rhyme?)

Rhyme Production (Tell me a word (real or make-believe) that rhymes with _____?)

- Sing nursery rhymes. This website has nursery rhyme lyrics, songs, and videos: <http://www.mothergooseclub.com/rhymes.php>
- Substitute rhyming words (example: Hickory, dickory, dock, the mouse ran up the ?. Child changes 'clock' to 'sock'.)
- Play rhyming games while in the car or at the grocery store
- What's the Word? Say a word in parts (syllables) and ask child to repeat the entire word. (example: Parent: "di...no..saur" Child: "dinosaur"). Switch roles.
- Play "I Spy" games. "I see something that begins with the /s/ sound." (swing, sandwich, etc.)
- Sing with your child and clap to the rhythm/beat.

Letter Recognition

Begin with a group of five letters the child already knows or that are in his/her name. When they know this group of letters well, add another group of three to five letters. Continue until they know all 26 letters of the alphabet (alphabetically and randomly sequenced).

- Play with magnetic or plastic letters. Make words on the refrigerator door or a cookie sheet. Touch and say the letter names. Spell child's name and simple words.
- Sponge letters are fun during bath time.
- Alphabet Archaeologist: Hide letters in salt, rice or sand.
- Child names letters he/she draws in salt, rice or sand.

Using the Internet

There are many other suggestions to help you as a parent build on your child's current skills. Remember the Internet is a source of free games and informal activities to help your preschooler develop emerging reading skills. Here are just a few:

PBS Kids: Between the Lions

<http://pbskids.org/lions/index.html>

PBS Kids: Literacy Tips

http://www.pbs.org/parents/lions/activities/literacy_tips.html

Reading Rockets: Practical Ideas for Parents of Preschoolers. Find the best apps for building literacy skills.

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article.php?ID=127>

Get Ready to Read: Child-Friendly Activities

<http://www.getreadytoread.org/>

Family Education Network: Get Ready to Read

<http://life.familyeducation.com/toddler/preschool/53195.html>

Starfall: ABCs, Learning to Read, Mathematics, Songs

<http://www.starfall.com/>

Fisher-Price Online Games

http://www.fisher-price.com/en_US/GamesandActivities/OnlineGames/index.html

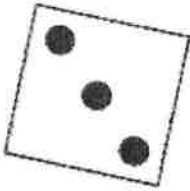


Math Activities for students that will be entering Kindergarten

Children ages 4 – 5, learn math best by engaging in concrete (hands-on) activities and projects. They love to ask questions and play games that are related to math. The table below lists games and activities you can use to support key math ideas.

Math Aspect	Games and activities
Number sense	<p>Count food items at snack time (e.g., 5 crackers, 20 raisins, 10 baby carrots).</p> <hr/> <p>Use a calendar to count down the days to a birthday or special holiday. Help your child see the connection between a numeral like "5," the word "five," and five days on the calendar.</p> <hr/> <p>Practice simple addition and subtraction using small toys and blocks.</p> <hr/> <p>Play simple board games where your child moves a game piece from one position to the next.</p>
Geometry	<p>Have your child name the shapes of cookie cutters or blocks.</p> <hr/> <p>Arrange cookie cutters in patterns on a cookie sheet or placemat. A simple pattern might be: star-circle-star-circle.</p>
Measurement	<p>Let your child help you measure ingredients for a simple recipe - preferably a favorite!</p> <hr/> <p>Measure your child's height every month or so, showing how you use a yardstick or tape measure. Mark his or her height on a "growth chart" or a mark on a door frame. Do the same with any siblings. Help your child compare his or her own height to previous months and also to his or her siblings' heights.</p>
Math language	<p>Talk through games and daily activities that involve math concepts.</p> <hr/> <p>Have your child name numbers and shapes.</p> <hr/> <p>Help him or her understand and express comparisons like more than/less than, bigger/smaller, and near/far.</p>
Spatial relations	<p>Play games where you direct your child to jump forward and back, to run far from you or stay nearby.</p> <hr/> <p>Use songs with corresponding movements to teach concepts like in and out, up and down, and round and round. http://www.getreadytoread.org/</p>

Weave math into language arts, music, art, and physical activity. For example, have your student do an art project and incorporate geometry through the use of certain shapes and patterns. You might also do math through stories and songs that include counting, numbers, and the language of math; the Dr. Seuss classic, *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish* is one fun example.

Number Match is a fun activity you can create on index cards for a student preparing to enter Kindergarten. Make a set of cards showing the following representations for each number 1 to 5 (the numeral, the number name, dots on dice, fingers, tally marks and ten frame support. *Examples shown for the number 3.*

3	three	
		

In the beginning choose two sets of cards (e.g. cards for 1 and 2). Mix the cards up and put them out face up on a flat surface. Have the child sort the cards into the pile for 1 and the pile for 2. Have the child explain how they know which pile to put the card in. Eventually compare other numbers until all cards can be used at the same time. If the child becomes proficient with recognizing the numbers 1-5 make another set of cards for numbers 6-10.

Internet sites with math activities:

<http://www.coolmath.com/parents/getready.htm>

<http://www.parentingscience.com/preschool-math-lessons.html>

<http://www.jefferson.k12.ky.us/pubs/mathtips.pdf> pages 4-6

http://www.uen.org/parents/kindergarten_readiness.shtml