

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

DECEMBER 2018

READING

Poetic rhythm

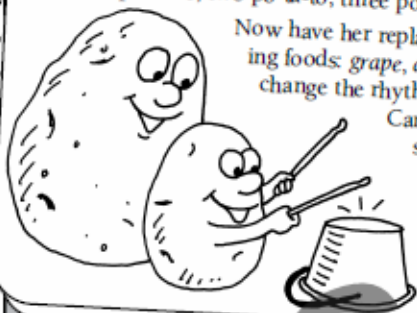
Playing with the rhythm of poetry lets your child hear individual syllables and sounds—a skill that helps her sound out words when she reads.

Ingredients: poem or song, “drumsticks” (pencils or chopsticks), pot or bucket

Ask your youngster to read a verse slowly and drum the rhythm on an upside-down pot or bucket, striking the drum once for each syllable. *Example:* “One po-ta-to, two po-ta-to, three po-ta-to four.”

Now have her replace *potato* with each of the following foods: *grape*, *apple*, and *cucumber*. Which words change the rhythm? (Answers: *grape* and *apple*.)

Can she tell you why? (*Grape* has one syllable, and *apple* has two. But *potato* and *cucumber* contain the same number of syllables—three—so the rhythm stays the same.)



WRITING

Make handwriting practice fun for your child by letting him “write” in rice. Have him spread a thin layer of rice on a baking sheet. He can use his finger to write the alphabet, his name, or short messages to you (“I love you!”).



THINKING

Your youngster needs her “thinking cap” for this idea that will inspire her to think outside the box. Take turns asking each other creative questions like “What would our home look like if there were no colors?” or “Where would cats work if they had jobs?” Come up with serious or outrageous answers!



HISTORY

Headlines in history

What makes a good headline? This idea encourages your youngster to summarize historical events.

Ingredients: newspaper, pencil, paper

Suggest that your child read several headlines in the newspaper or on news websites. What do they have in common? He might say they’re short, they tell who and what the articles are about, and they get readers’ attention.

Then, your youngster could pick an event he learned about in history, such as the Wright brothers’ flight. He can pretend he’s a newspaper reporter breaking the news. What headline would he write for his article? (“Wright brothers take to the sky.”)



MATH

Money addition

Your child will work on adding money with this “gem” of an activity.

Ingredients: construction paper, scissors, pencil, hole-punch, yarn

Pretend that you and your youngster own a jewelry store. You’ve just received a shipment of precious stones shaped like circles, squares, and triangles. Have her cut out several copies of each shape from different-colored construction paper and write a value on each “gem.” *Examples:* circles are worth \$5, triangles \$15, and squares \$25.

Now ask your child to design a necklace by hole-punching the gems and stringing them on yarn. Next, she should add up the gems’ values to figure out what the necklace would cost.

Idea: Challenge her to create a bracelet that’s worth a certain amount (\$95, \$150). Can she make two bracelets worth the same amount but using different gems?



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.”

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Character Corner

SCIENCE

Hands-on experiment

This experiment shows your youngster why he should wash his hands before he eats.

Ingredients: two zipper bags, marker, two slices of bread

Label one bag "Clean hands" and the other "Dirty hands." Your child should wash and dry his hands and press one hand onto a slice of bread. Seal the bread in the "Clean hands" bag. Next, let him rub a hand on the floor, press it against another piece of bread, and seal this slice in the "Dirty hands" bag. (He'll need to wash his hands after this.)

Put both bags in a warm, dark place, and ask him to check them daily and tell you what he observes.

What happens? While he won't see the germs on the "dirty" bread, he'll notice that mold appears on that slice first. That's because the germs on his hands served as "food" to help the mold grow.



STUDY SKILLS

Have your child play a game of "Study Jeopardy" with a classmate to prepare for a test or quiz. They can take turns giving an answer ("stratus, cirrus, and cumulus"). The other player should ask the question that goes with it ("What are three types of clouds?").



SAFETY

Help your youngster memorize her address and family members' phone numbers. She could practice writing the address on old envelopes and sing each phone number to a tune she makes up. Also, let her type the phone numbers into a toy phone or a cell phone you no longer use.



TEAMWORK

Suggest that your child team up with you, a sibling, or a friend to complete a jigsaw puzzle. The catch? They should take turns placing one piece at a time. They'll soon discover that working together makes finishing the puzzle easier.



CARING

Looking after a pet teaches your youngster about caring and compassion. Give him jobs like putting out fresh food and water for a guinea pig. **Tip:** No pet? He might take care of a stuffed animal by giving it a blanket and lots of hugs.



ACCOUNTABILITY

With your child, think of things you're each accountable for. Maybe she'll point out that she has to do homework and her laundry, and you go to work and pay the bills. Name more people (teacher, doctor), and say what others depend on them to do.



SPELLING

Encourage your child to practice spelling with this activity. Give her old magazines or catalogs, and call out words she's learning to spell. She can look through the publications to find the letters in each word, cut them out, and glue them onto a piece of paper in the right order.



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

TIME

What can your youngster accomplish in 5 seconds? How about in 5 hours? Encourage him to think about units of time by brainstorming tasks that take seconds, minutes, hours, days, or years. For example, perhaps he takes a shower in 5 minutes and reads a chapter book in 5 days.

