

TRAVEL ACTIVITIES

Get road maps for older children. Have each child use a highlighter pen to mark your route as you go. See if children can predict the next city that you will pass. Are you going North, South, East or West? What road are you traveling on? As children get older, make the questions more difficult to answer.

Encourage your child to write to the Chamber of Commerce for brochures about places you can go to on your trip.

Make a “Bingo Card” for things that might be seen on your trip. If your children are young, use pictures that they help you select, cut and paste from a magazine or newspaper. Reward the “Bingo” Players with comic books or other fun reading materials for vacation.



TELEVISION

Limit TV watching to free up time for reading

If it is available, have your older children watch close captioned TV with the sound off. This also builds empathy for those who are hearing impaired.

As your child watches commercials on television, ask him or her to invent a product and write slogans or an ad for it.

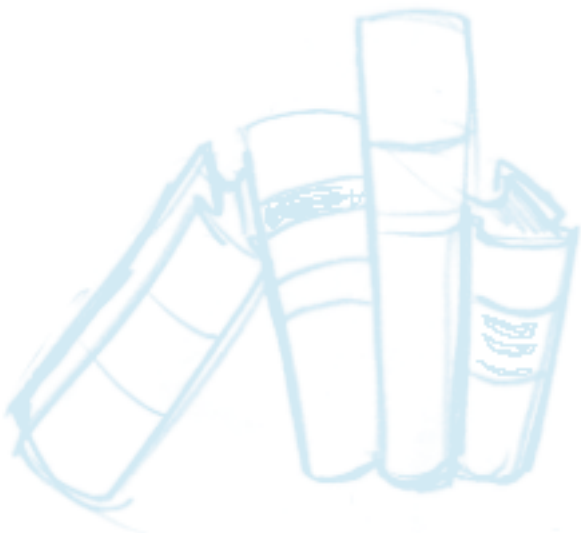
Using TV Guide or the TV section of their newspaper, have your children select their shows for the day. Then have them give you a “persuasive speech” as to why they should be permitted to watch that show.



BOOKS

Look for “garage sales” in your local newspaper. Find sales near your home that may have books. Plan a route, using a map of your area, usually in the phone book. Give each child a dollar. Let them buy their own book!

- Swap books with family and friends so that your children will have more books to read.
- Ask friends, neighbors, and teachers to share the titles of their favorite books.
- Get library cards for your children and let them choose books to check out.
- Find your Library Summertime Schedule - (Storytelling Time, Youth Book Club, Puppet Show, etc.)

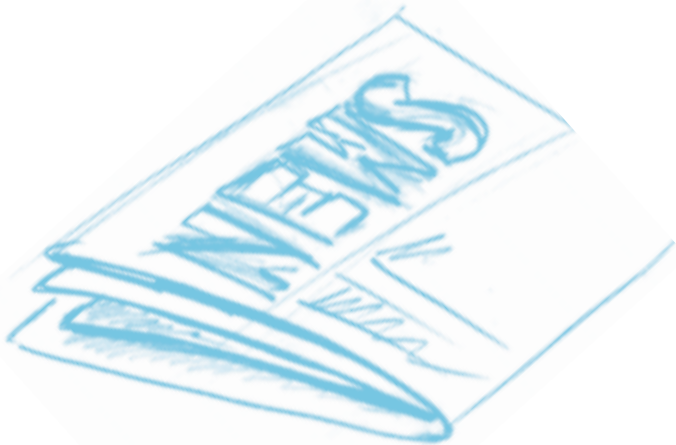


NEWSPAPER ACTIVITIES

Clip out an interesting news story and cut the paragraphs apart. Ask your child to read the paragraphs and put them in order.

Ask your child to read a short editorial printed in your local newspaper and to underline all the facts with a green pencil and all the opinions with an orange pencil.

Pictures fascinate children of all ages. Clip pictures in the newspaper. Ask your child to tell you about the picture or list adjectives to describe the picture.

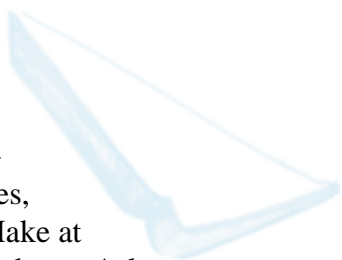


FUN IN THE KITCHEN

Let 'Em Eat

Shapes

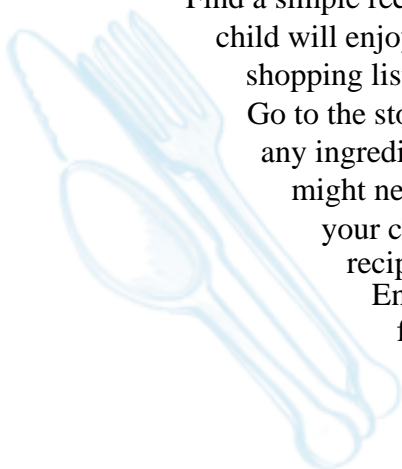
Cut bread into different shapes—rectangles, triangles, squares, circles. Make at least two of each shape. Ask your youngster to choose a pair of similar shapes, then to put jam on the first piece, and to place the second piece on top to make a sandwich. This is a snack plus a game to match shapes.



Sorting and Stacking

Teach classification skills with dinnerware. Ask your child to match and stack dishes of similar sizes and shapes. Also have your child sort flatware - forks with forks, spoons with spoons. This is like recognizing the shapes of letters and numbers.

Find a simple recipe that your child will enjoy. Make a shopping list together. Go to the store to “find” any ingredients that you might need. Have your child read the recipe to you. Enjoy the food!!



FUN IN THE SUN



Lie on the ground and describe the shapes of the clouds.

Have kids “paint” their names with water on a hot sidewalk, then watch the letters disappear! To sneak in some science, have kids guess how long it takes for wet footprints to evaporate, then time it. Challenge them to guess the melting time of ice cubes.

Drop items in a pail of water to see if they sink or float. Have children record all guesses and results, and reward the “players” with frozen treats.

Use Sidewalk Chalk to write messages to passers-by such as “Have a Nice Day.”

If you go to the beach,

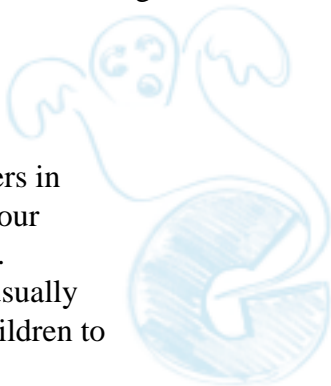
children can make letters in the sand by “walking.” Pretend you are writing messages to airplanes that might pass by.

READING

Surround your child in Reading Materials

Read a scary story to your child with the lights out, using a flashlight.

Make an alphabet poster with your child. Print the letters in large type and let your child draw pictures. Capital letters are usually easier for young children to learn first.

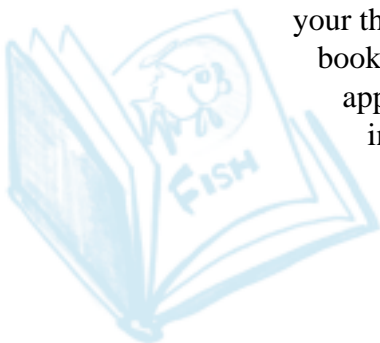


Record your children reading a book and replay it so that they can listen to themselves. Repeat this activity so that your children can listen to themselves improve.

Play reading tag by choosing a book with many words that your child knows. Each time you want your child to read a word, tap him on the shoulder.

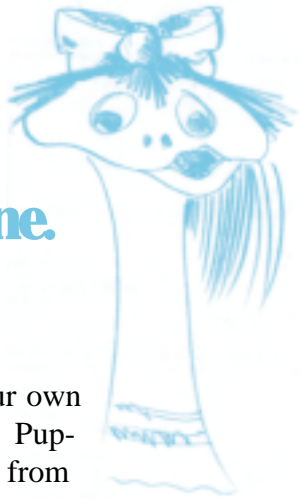
Create a "Family Reading Night" - pick a theme such as, "western", "multi-cultural" or "decades like the 60's."

Have dinner and dress-up to go with your theme. Select books that are appropriate - invite friends and neighbors.



WRITING

Write new words to a favorite tune.



Write and act out your own play or puppet show. Puppets are fun to make from socks or gloves with yarn and markers. Invite the neighbor kids and have snacks. Videotape it if you can.

Help your child make his or her own storybook. Make funny drawings, or glue photos of family members onto silly magazine pictures. A younger child can dictate the story; older children can write it themselves. Let creativity rule!

Cut out words from a newspaper or magazine and make your own telegram.

Use index cards and label all of the furniture in your child's room.

Have your child write letters to family members. For younger children, you can have them dictate, while you write. Leave blanks for them to fill in some words that they can manage.

FUN AT HOME

Give your children supplies for writing, such as a chalkboard, chalk, markers, highlighters, a marker board, paper, pencils and crayons. Give your children books as gifts on birthdays and on special holidays.

Challenge younger children to find letters of the alphabet on everyday items like street signs, cereal boxes, or newspapers. By asking “How many A’s can you find?” you also exercise counting skills.

Look out a window and tell a story of what you see.

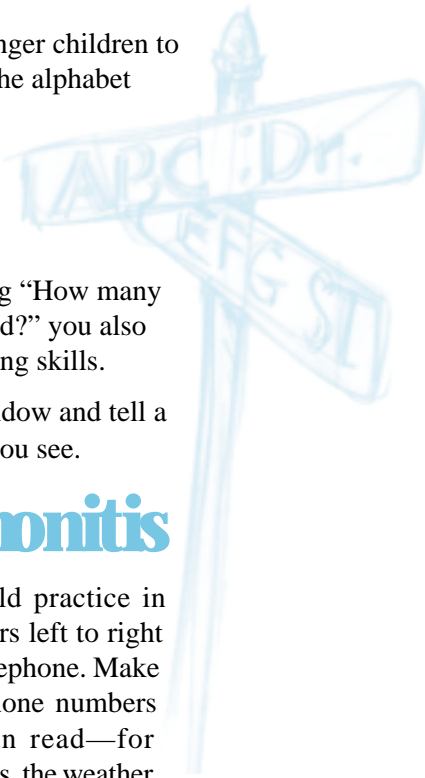
Telephonitis

Give your child practice in reading numbers left to right by dialing a telephone. Make a list of telephone numbers your child can read—for relatives, friends, the weather bureau—and have your child make a call or two.

Write letters on cards.

Hold up the cards one at a time and have your children say the sounds (for example, the d sound for the letter “d”).

Hide an inexpensive treat that your child will enjoy. Write out directions for finding the treat or draw a map. Have your child find it. You can make it into a treasure hunt by having him or her go to several different places and getting new maps or directions before they finding the “treasure.”



MUSIC AND GAMES

Teach your children songs and poems that are fun to sing and say (for example, songs like “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” and poems like “Wee Willie Winkie” or “Little Miss Muffet”).

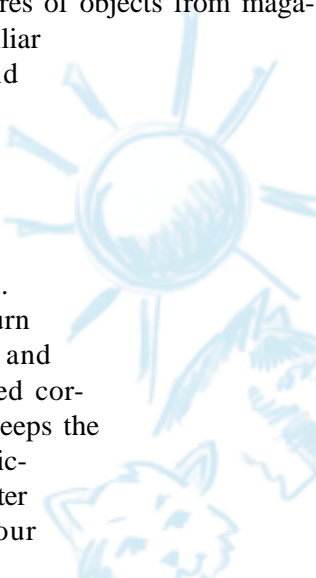
Play games such as “Red-Light, Green-Light,” and “Simon Says” that require talking, listening, following directions, and giving directions.

Give your child these tongue twisters to learn.

Then have them write their own:

- *Six sick slick slim sycamore saplings.*
- *A box of biscuits, a batch of mixed biscuits.*
- *A skunk sat on a stump and thunk the stump stunk, but the stump thunk the skunk stunk.*

Cut a set of pictures of objects from magazines that are familiar to your child and have names that are easy to spell (*un, man, dog, cat, fan, rug*). Put the pictures face down on a table. Have the child turn the picture over and spell it. If spelled correctly, the child keeps the picture. Use the pictures to make a poster of words that your child can “read.”



Make a “deck” of cards using index cards and simple words such as *the, said, are, don't, have, one, two, love, you*. Make two cards with each word on it. Play “Go Fish” with the word cards. As your child learns the words, add new ones. For younger children, use the letters of the alphabet to make the deck of cards.