

# At Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers (2 years old)

Week of April 6, 2020



**KinderCare**<sup>®</sup>  
LEARNING CENTERS

# This Week's Theme:

# Plants and Gardens

[Getting Ready for the Week: Guidelines and Materials Prep](#)

[How to Think Like a Teacher: Teacher Talk](#)

[Nutrition and Wellness Tip of the Week](#)

## MONDAY

- [Physical Development and Wellness Activity: Nature Walk](#)
- [Phonics Adventures Activity: Green and Growing](#)
- [Everyday Learning Experience](#)
- [Social and Emotional Learning: Focus on Routines](#)

## TUESDAY

- [Cognitive Development Activity: Measuring Plants](#)
- [Everyday Learning Experience](#)
- [Social and Emotional Learning: Focus on Environment](#)

## WEDNESDAY

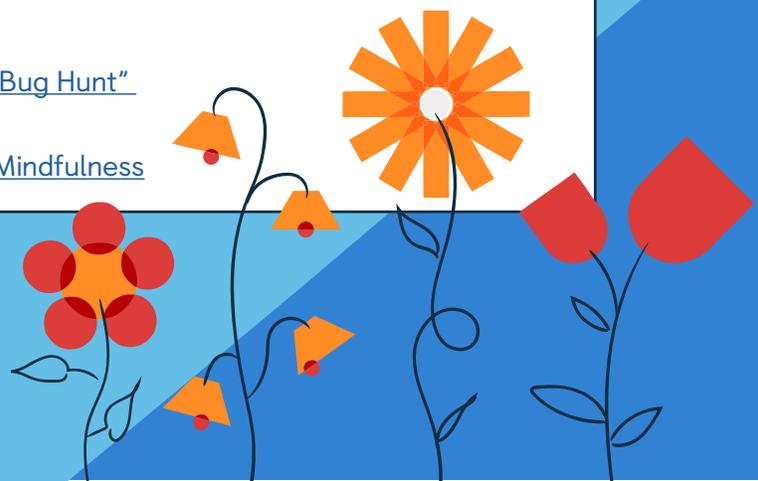
- [Executive Function Activity: I Spy](#)
- [Everyday Learning Experience](#)
- [Social and Emotional Learning: Focus on Behavior](#)

## THURSDAY

- [Language and Literacy Activity: Edible Roots](#)
- [Music Explorers Activity: Spring Landscapes](#)
- [Everyday Learning Experience](#)
- [Social and Emotional Learning: Focus on Play](#)

## FRIDAY

- [Creative Expression Activity: "Going on a Bug Hunt"](#)
- [Everyday Learning Experience](#)
- [Social and Emotional Learning: Focus on Mindfulness](#)



# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

## Week of April 6, 2020

### Getting Ready for the Week

During the month of April children in our centers explore the wonders of gardening, including how plants grow, parts of plants, and different types of gardens. This guide includes several experiences that will help your child explore gardening at home. Here are a few guidelines to keep in mind as you plan for these learning activities and the week ahead.

Our guide for Discovery Preschool-aged children includes both activities for you to lead, and quieter activities they can practice with less direction. We'll help you develop a consistent routine that will make them feel more secure, including tips on providing learning moments while children help with household tasks and reminders to work on toilet training.

For this age group, our activities include:

- Tips on how to "Think Like a Teacher"
- Lots of activities focusing on keeping children active, hands on, and using their gross motor functions!
- Opportunities to work on social emotional learning, and we've even included some Learning Adventures content.
- Helping you solidify connections between developmental domains for this fast-growing group.

### Materials to Gather for the Week

Gather these materials Sunday evening and put them in a basket or container so they are ready to go for the week!

- House plants of varying heights, smaller outdoor plants will work as well
- Scissors (for your use only)
- Yarn or string
- Books with pictures or illustrations of plants or gardens
- Green and Growing [video link](#)
- [Winter Tree Sheet](#) (or sketch a simple leafless tree on paper, if you don't have a printer)
- Crayons
- Spring Landscapes [video link](#)

# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

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## How to Think Like a Teacher: Teacher Talk

From counting flower petals to answering your child's 1000th question of the day, your words can guide and inspire learning no matter where you are or what you're doing. Check out these resources to help you understand the impact that talking to your child has on their development and to help you find just the right words to keep the learning going.

**From Cries to Conversations** Check out [this video](#) to learn how even very young children are communicating with you and how you can communicate back to help them develop language skills, guide their behavior, and strengthen your relationship.

## Counting Claps and Sorting Shapes: Talking Like a Teacher All Throughout Your Day

Your child never stops learning, even when it comes to subjects like math, language, and even science. These concepts might sound a bit on the academic side, but they're easy to work into your everyday routines with your child. Here are some examples:

**Math:** How many steps does it take to get from the couch to the sink to wash our hands? Which cup in the dishwasher is the biggest? What is under the table and what is on top of it? Your child's day is full of opportunities to talk about numbers, size, and position, along with other critically important foundational math concepts.

**Language:** Rhyming words in a song; Letters on the juice carton; Words that start with the same sound as your child's name: There are as many chances to talk about letters and language during your child's day as there are words in their favorite book. From exposure to sounds and letters for younger children to building vocabularies and book awareness for older ones, you can nurture your child's language development any time of the day.

**Science:** Problem solving is a foundational skill in scientific thinking, and you can encourage it in your child no matter how old they are. Does a fussy baby react to the sight of a bottle or a rattle? What color crayon does your child need to draw the sun? How can your preschooler move the laundry from the basket to the drawer? These everyday problem-solving tasks are the building blocks of scientific thinking and can happen anywhere, any time of day!

For more ideas on how to keep the learning going, look for the **Everyday Learning Experiences** described throughout this guide.

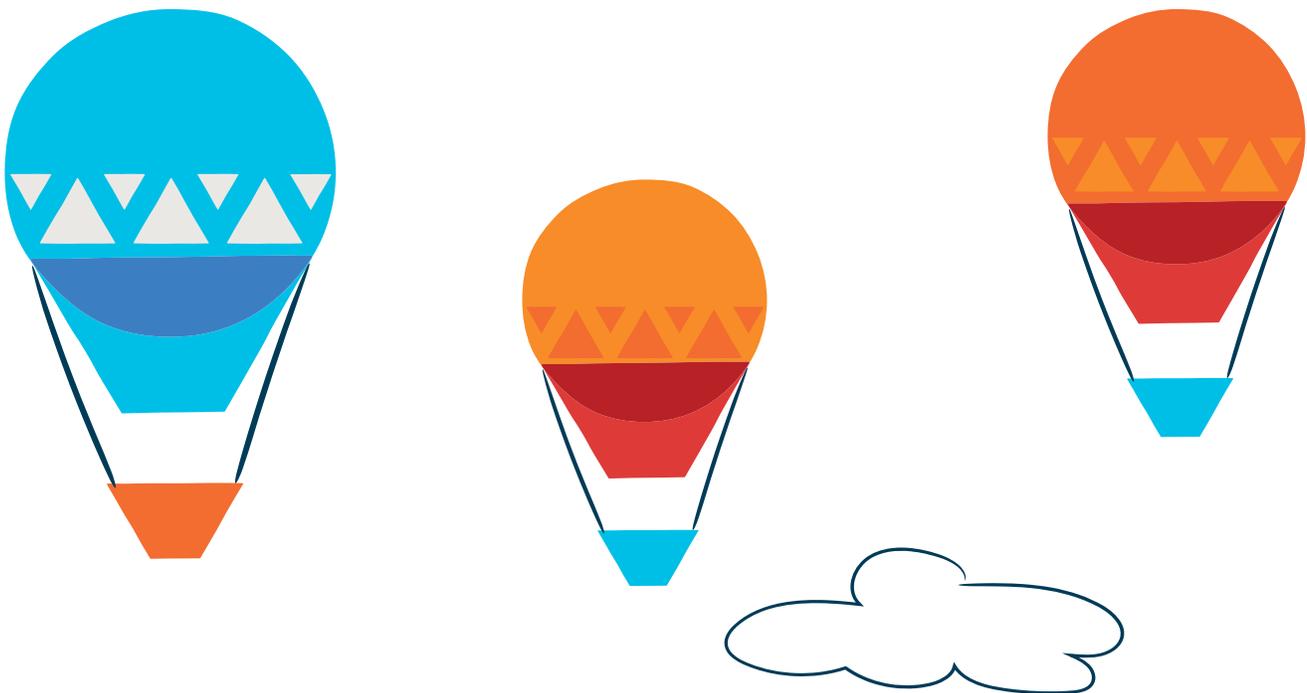
# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

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## Tips for Talking to Young Children

- **Use positive statements.** Tell children what they CAN do, instead of what they can't.
- **Give simple instructions.** Too many instructions at once can be overwhelming and confusing.
- **Model "I" messages.** Use language that expresses your feelings and the reasons behind them.
- **Ask open-ended questions.** Talk to children, not at them. Ask open-ended questions that allow children to explain their thought processes, and stay curious.
- **Offer choices you can live with.** Give children a choice whenever possible, but be ready to honor their decision.

Want even more great tips on talking to your child? Check out [this article](#) from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)



## IN OTHER WORDS

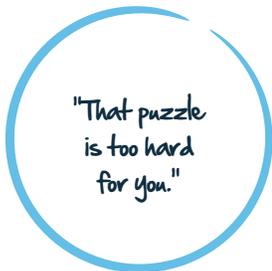
### COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN

Read the speech bubble. Then, rewrite the text so that it sends a clear, positive message, and encourages learning.



"You can walk to the bedroom. How many steps will it take to get there?"

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"I see that you want to run. Let's go outside and run to the blue chair!"

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**Try It!** Pick a developmental area where you want to encourage your child's growth, such as math, art, science, or language. Think of ways that you can build their skills in those areas throughout your daily routine. Can you combine more than one learning area in the same experience?

# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

## Week of April 6, 2020

### Nutrition and Wellness Tip of the Week

#### Meal Planning and Preparation

Does it feel like a good part of your day is spent engaged in meal planning, preparation, and clean-up, just to turn around and do it all over again? We know you are juggling full-time parenting with keeping your child learning, all while you may even be working from home. Here are some meal planning tips for your busy family.

Spend **5-10 minutes** each evening planning and doing some advanced prep for dinners, lunches, and snacks for the next three days. A few minutes spent planning and prepping each night will save you hours of time and headaches spent making meals and snacks for your family. Look through your pantry/cupboards and refrigerator and **write down** all the possible meal/snack combinations you can make with what you have on hand (this is also the time to update your shopping list). Recipes can be great for guidance, but they can quickly take you down a rabbit hole, robbing precious time. Think of ways you can incorporate three basic components – protein, vegetable, and fruit and grain – into one-pot meals like soups or casseroles.

**For soups:** Choose a protein, such as beans, meat/seafood, chickpeas, lentils, tofu, tempeh. Add vegetables, herbs and spices, broth or stock, and water. You can either add the grain to this soup (e.g., noodles) or you can serve a grain such as whole-wheat bread on the side. Soup is a fast, healthy meal option and a great way to use up fresh produce.

**Casseroles:** The same concepts as with soups apply here, but substitute a sauce for the broth or stock and bake the dish in the oven.

**One-pot meals:** Prepared in a slow cooker or instapot, these meals can save valuable time as well. Simply add all your components, such as frozen chicken breasts, a jar of salsa, corn, and rice or black beans to the pot, set your cooking time, and go.

For snacks, select foods from two food groups, such as a fruit or vegetable paired with a protein that contains healthy fats.

Some nutrient-rich examples:

- Apples and nut butter/sun butter
- Hard-boiled eggs and carrot sticks
- Vegetable sticks and, hummus
- Whole-grain bread/crackers with hummus, nut butter, or avocado
- Unsweetened yogurt with fruit
- Turkey slices and cucumber
- Beans and tortilla (for a tasty treat, sprinkle with cheese and broil for four, minutes)

# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

## Week of April 6, 2020

Monday, April 6, 2020

### Physical Development and Wellness Activity: Nature Walk

**Length of activity:** N/A

**What your child is learning:**

In addition to increasing their confidence and proficiency with walking, through this activity your child is participating in conversation and exploring asking and answering questions based on new or prior experiences.

**Level of Engagement Required by Adult:** High

**What you need:** N/A

**What you do:** While you and your child are on a walk or playing outdoors, encourage them to use their senses to see, hear, and smell things around them. As you're walking or playing, point out different types of plants and flowers and share observations or ask your child questions. For example, "Look at the two red flowers. Which flower is bigger?"

**If your child is ready:** Play an If-Then game with your child selecting one common spring item you see in your yard or neighborhood. For example, if you see a bird, then flap your arms like a bird flaps its wings. Or if you see a flower, then buzz like a bee. Select only one or two If-Then items at a time.

### Phonics Adventures Activity: Green and Growing

**Length of activity:** 5-15 minutes

**What your child is learning:**

- How to listen carefully for a /g/ word that is repeated
- How to say /g/ as the beginning sound in familiar words
- To control the body to move in a certain way

**Level of engagement required by adult:** High

**What you need:**

- Indoor or outdoor plant (optional)
- [Video link](#) to see this activity in action!

# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

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**What you do:** Talk with your child about plants when they start to grow. What color are plants when they first start to grow? Plants can be many colors when they first start to grow, such as purple, red, yellow, or white, but most plants start out green. Talk about the words green and grow and the letter sound at the beginning of each word, /g/. Say the /g/ sound together a few times.

Sit with your child on the floor, with your bodies curled up, as if you are inside a seed. Say the names of some random things, such as the items listed below, inserting the word grow here and there. Ask your child to “grow” with you a little by rising from your curled-up position each time you say grow.

House	Train	Grow
Table	Grow	Chair
Grow	Grow	Grow
Lamp	Foot	

## Questions to ask:

- What happens when a seed sprouts and begins to grow?
- What color are most plants when they first start to grow?
- What sound do you hear at the beginning of the word grow?

## Everyday Learning Activities

### Try this to help your child develop the skills described today no matter what you're doing:

Start a project like cooking or washing clothes, then walk around the space with your child. Ask them to describe what changes they see, hear, or smell. Can they name what's causing the changes?

## Social and Emotional Learning: Focus on Routines

No matter what your daily schedule looks like, children thrive when they know what's expected of them right now and what's going to happen next. Knowing what comes next can also be a great motivator to get through the task at hand.

**Try this:** When there's something your child needs to do, like wash their hands or clean up their toys, before they can do what they want to do, like eat a yummy snack or start a new activity, use “first, then” language:

*“First we wash our hands, then we eat.”*

*“First we put the blocks in the basket, then we pick a book to read.”*

# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

## Week of April 6, 2020

Tuesday, April 7, 2020

### Cognitive Development Activity: Measuring Plants

**Length of activity:** 10-15 minutes

**What your child is learning:**

Your child is learning measurement concepts (height and length) and with your guidance may begin to observe how this is related to other experiences and surroundings (i.e., comparing heights of indoor plants to outdoor plants).

**Level of Engagement Required by Adult:** Medium

**What you need:**

- ❑ House plants of varying heights, smaller outdoor plants will work as well
- ❑ Scissors (for your use only)
- ❑ Yarn or string

**What you do:** Cut a piece of yarn about 6 inches long. Show your child how to use the yarn to measure a plant by holding one end of the yarn at the base of the plant and the other end straight up, making sure it is taut. Ask your child if the plant is taller or shorter than the yarn. Give your child the yarn and encourage them to measure other plants. As your child measures each plant, ask them to share if the plant is taller or shorter than the yarn.

**If your child is ready:** Provide them with varying lengths of yarn between 6 inches and 1 foot. Have them measure each plant with each length of yarn.

### Everyday Learning Activities

**Try this to help your child develop the skills described today no matter what you're doing:**

Show your child an object you are using, like a laptop, phone, or notebook. Help them place their hand against the object. Is their hand bigger or smaller than the object? What else can they use their hand to measure?

### Social and Emotional Learning: Focus on Environment

Pictures are a great way to help children remember your daily routine and prevent challenging behaviors. They can also cut back on the number of verbal reminders you have to give, freeing you up for other tasks and giving your child the chance to build independence and confidence.

# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

## Week of April 6, 2020

**Try this:** As you go through your day, snap a quick picture of the things your child is doing, such as getting dressed, eating breakfast, taking a nap, and putting their toys away. No camera? You can also work together to draw pictures of your day. Arrange the pictures, in order, into a collage. Use this “visual schedule” to help your child remember what’s happening now and what’s going to happen next.

### Wednesday, April 8, 2020

#### Executive Function Activity: I Spy

**Length of activity:** 10–15 minutes

**What your child is learning:** Through this activity your child is learning communication skills as they listen to the clues provided and suggest answers that may or may not be correct. By participating in the game until they have guessed correctly, your child is practicing attention and perseverance.

**Level of Engagement Required by Adult:** High

**What you need:** Book with pictures or illustrations of plants or gardens

**What you do:** Select a picture or illustration from the book and share it with your child. Tell your child that you will give clues about something you see on the page and they will try to guess what you see. Begin by giving an “I Spy” clue, such as, “In this picture, I spy something green.” Invite your child to guess. If they do not guess correctly, provide additional clues. “I spy something green that has an orange flower.” Continue providing clues until your child has guessed what you see.

**If your child is ready:** Expand your I Spy playing area by looking for objects in your immediate environment instead of pictures in a book.

#### Everyday Learning Activities

**Try this to help your child develop the skills described today no matter what you’re doing:** Think of a category that your child is familiar with, such as colors or basic shapes. Wherever you are, pick an object that they can reasonably identify, such as something blue. Ask them if they can see the “something blue” that you see—can they find it? Can they find anything else that fits the category?

# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

## Week of April 6, 2020

### Social and Emotional Learning: Focus on Behavior

For children, behavior is a form of communication. This means that everything they do is motivated by an underlying feeling or need. The more we can help children learn to name their feelings, the better they'll become at recognizing them and developing strategies for coping with them.

**Try this:** If your child resists participating in an activity like cleaning up or getting ready to rest, let them know you understand why. Then offer a solution that works for you:

*"I see you're frustrated that it's time to clean up. You're having so much fun with those blocks. You're not ready to put them away. Let's build one more tower before we put them back in the box."*

### Thursday, April 9, 2020

#### Language and Literacy Activity: Edible Roots

**Length of activity:** N/A

**What your child is learning:** While talking about root vegetables, your child is increasing their vocabulary and developing conversation skills. In addition, helping with food preparation builds confidence in their abilities while introducing them to basic foods and food sources.

**Level of Engagement Required by Adult:** High

**What you need:** Food served during mealtime that includes a root vegetable

**What you do:** While preparing any root vegetables for a meal, include your child so they can see the root vegetable in whole form. Share with your child that a root vegetable is a part of a plant that grows underground and can be eaten. Talk with your child about the root vegetable you are preparing and invite your child to touch, smell, and perhaps even taste it. Encourage your child to share their observations. After the root vegetable has been prepared, invite your child to make new observations.

#### Root Vegetables

Beet	Potato
Carrot	Radish
Celeriac or celery root	Rutabaga
Garlic	Sunchoke
Ginger	Sweet potato
Jicama	Turnip
Onions	Yams

# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

## Week of April 6, 2020

**If your child is ready:** Help your child make comparisons of the food in raw or whole form and prepared or cooked form by recalling their previous observations. “When we were preparing the raw potato, you thought that it was hard and crunchy. Now you think the potato is mushy.”

### Music Explorers Activity: Spring Landscapes

**Length of activity:** 10 minutes

**What your child is learning:**

- Seasonal changes in nature, how music can express a scene or feeling
- Fine motor skills while creating visual art

**Level of engagement required by adult:** Medium

**What you need:**

- ❑ Real-life example or image of a tree blooming in spring
- ❑ [Winter Tree Sheet](#) (or sketch a simple leafless tree on paper, if you don't have a printer)
- ❑ Crayons
- ❑ [Video link](#) to see this activity in action!

**What you do:** Show your child an image or real-life example of a tree blooming in spring. Explain that many trees lose their leaves in fall and don't get them back until spring.

Give your child the printout (or your sketch) of a winter tree, without blossoms or leaves. Play the video and have

your child use crayons to transform the winter tree into a spring tree. Afterward, tell your child that the piece of music they heard is called “Spring.” Talk about what your child drew, what they “heard” in the music, and how they felt while listening to the music.

**Questions to Ask:**

- Where have you seen a tree getting new leaves or blossoms—are there any trees outside right now that have blossoms?
- What can you draw on the winter tree to turn it into a spring tree?



# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

## Week of April 6, 2020

- What else could you add to your drawing?
- What does this music make you think of?
- How does this music make you feel?

### Everyday Learning Activities

**Try this to help your child develop the skills described today no matter what you're doing:**

Talk to your child about the foods they like to eat. Ask them where the food comes from. Does it grow in the ground? On trees? Have they seen it growing outside, and does it look different when it's on their plate at mealtime?

### Social and Emotional Learning: Focus on Play

Chances are, you can't always get on the floor and play alongside your child when they want you to or you wish that you could. You can still interact with them while juggling other tasks! Narrating your child's every move or giving a "play by play" of their actions, is a great way to give them the attention you want and to add extra learning to their play.

**Try this:** Set your child up with an activity while you work on a task of your own that still allows you to see them and talk to them. For five minutes, describe everything you see them doing in detail. Although you'll be multi-tasking, be sure to make eye contact and specific language so your child knows you really are paying attention. Use opening phrases like "I see you..." or "now you are..." to let them know you're watching and interested, even while you're working on something of your own.

## Friday, April 3, 2020

### Creative Expression Activity: "Going on a Bug Hunt"

**Length of activity:** 10-15 minutes

**What your child is learning:** While listening to your words and observing your movements, your child is developing an awareness of different types of music and expressing themselves through creative movement.

**Level of Engagement Required by Adult:** High

**What you need:** N/A

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**What you do:** Familiarize yourself with the words and movements to “Going on a Bug Hunt.” Stand with your child, so they can see and copy your movement. Tell them you’re going to tell a story, and together you will act out the story. Begin by marching in place, you’ll continue to march throughout the bug hunt. Tell the story and act out the movements, inviting your child to perform the same movements.

**“Going on a Bug Hunt”** (said like the chant “Going on a Bear Hunt”)

We’re going on a bug hunt,  
Going to find some good ones!  
I’m not afraid, (point to self)  
Are you? (point to your child)  
No! (shake your head “no”)  
Oh look! The garden gate. (put one hand over eyes as if looking into the distance)  
We can’t go over it! (move hand in an over motion)  
We can’t go under it! (move hand in an under motion)  
We have to go through it! (pretend to open the gate)  
We’re in the garden, (spread hands apart as if showing someone the garden)  
We can’t go over it! (move hand in an over motion)  
We can’t go under it! (move hand in an under motion)  
We have to go through it! (pretend to walk through the garden)  
We’re going on a bug hunt,  
Going to find some good ones!  
I’m not afraid, (point to self)  
Are you? (point to your child)  
No! (shake your head “no”)  
Let’s look in the trees. (look up)  
We’re looking up high. (continue looking up)  
But we don’t see a thing. (shrug and shake your head)  
Have to keep looking!  
Let’s look in the plants. (look down)  
We’re looking down low. (pretend to be moving plants aside with your hands)  
But we don’t see a thing. (shrug and shake your head)  
Have to keep looking!  
Let’s look in the flowers!  
What do you see?  
I see two black eyes, (point to your eyes)  
Six long legs, (point to your legs)  
Two big wings, (flap your arms like wings)  
I see, b-b-b-b-bugs! (wiggle your hands in the air to show excitement)

**If your child is ready:** Repeat the story and invite your child to say familiar words or lines with you.

# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

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## Everyday Learning Activities

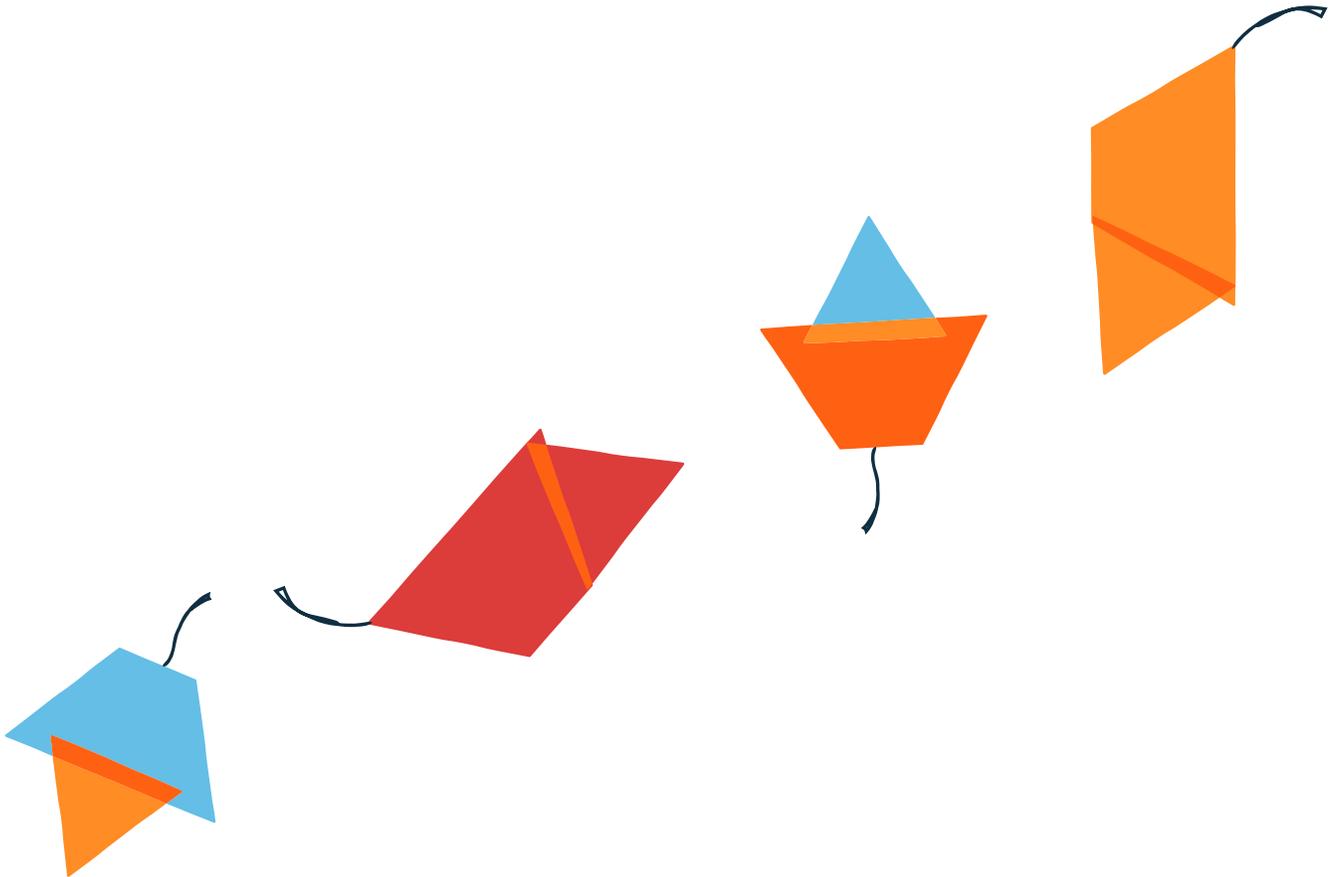
**Try this to help your child develop the skills described today no matter what you're doing:**

When you're cleaning up or looking for a particular item, enlist your child to help. Use words that encourage them to look in different areas, positions, and directions, such as: over, under, next to, on top of, or behind. Do they have any other words to use while looking? Can they follow your directions about where to look?

## Social and Emotional Learning: Focus on Mindfulness

Deep breaths help all of us feel calm and centered throughout the day. Making deep breathing fun for children is a great way to get them in the habit, and practicing alongside them will help you stay grounded, too.

**Try this:** Using pictures or real items from outside, practicing taking a deep breath in and blowing it out hard by "smelling the flower" and "blowing the leaf." How deeply do you need to breathe in to smell the flower? How hard do you have to blow out to move the leaf?



# Home Learning Guide for Discovery Preschoolers

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## Winter Tree Sheet (for Music Explorers Activity: Spring Landscapes)

