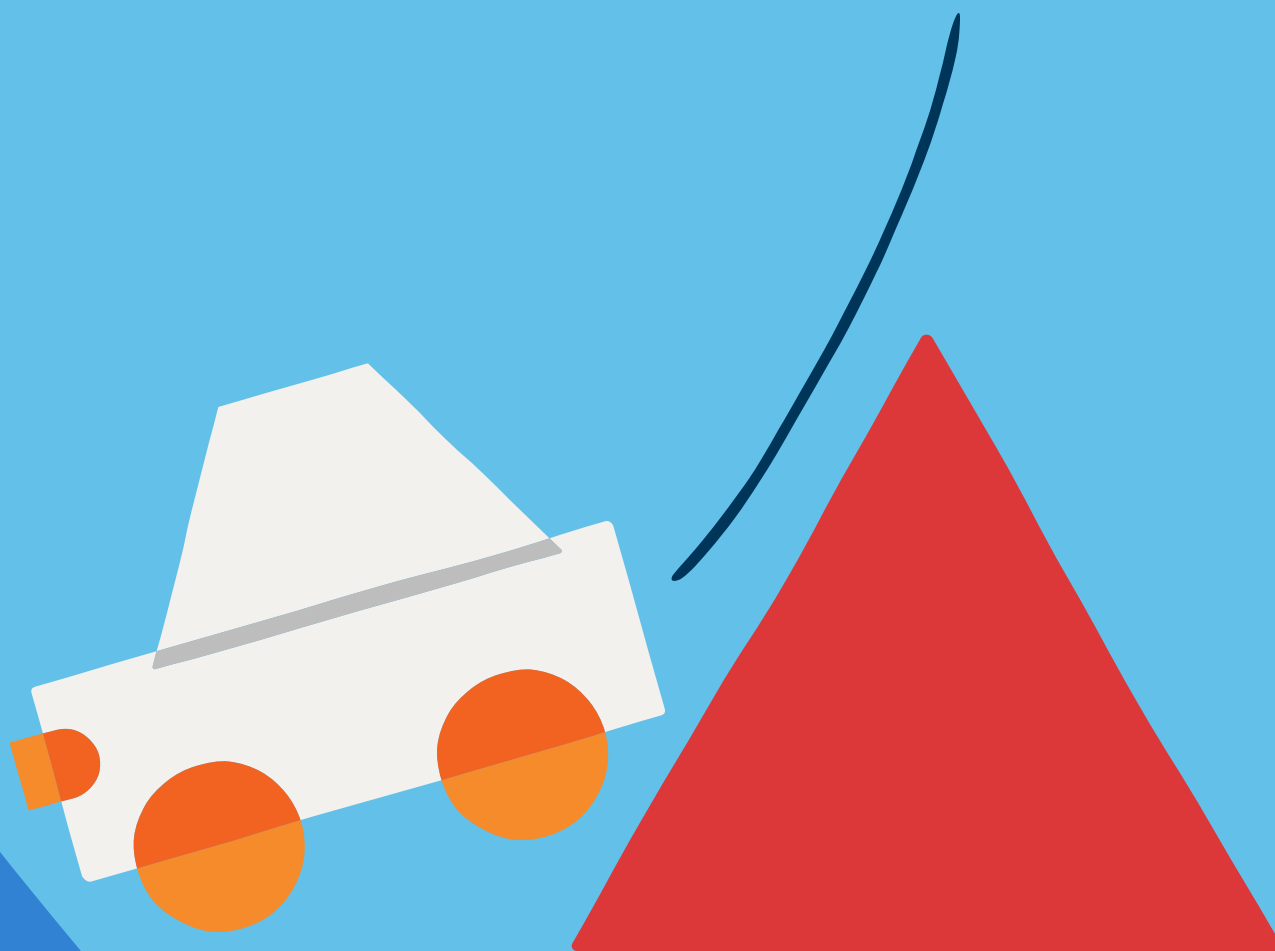


At Home Learning Guide for Preschoolers

(3 years old)

Week of March 30, 2020



This Week's Theme: In the Spring

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

[How to Think Like a Teacher: Learning Happens Everywhere](#)

[Focus on Routines: Good Morning!](#)

[Everyday Learning Experiences: Weather Report](#)

[Video Field Trips and Outside Resources](#)

[Social and Emotional Resources](#)

MONDAY

- [Physical Development and Wellness Activity: Puddle Jumping](#)
- [Phonics Enhancement: *Jan Ran* Read Aloud and the /a/ Sound](#)

TUESDAY

- [Language and Literacy Activity: Play-Dough® Mud Letters](#)
- [Cooking Enhancement: "The Hand Washing Song"](#)

WEDNESDAY

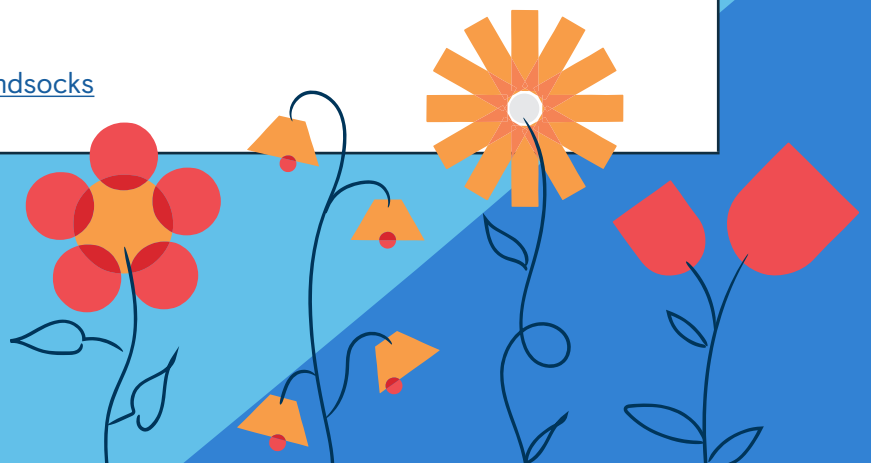
- [Cognitive Development Activity: Mud-Cake Math: Addition](#)
- [STEM Enhancement: Water Fireworks](#)

THURSDAY

- [Executive Function Activity: Rainbow Matching](#)
- [Music Enhancement: "Five Little Ducks Went Swimming One Day"](#)

FRIDAY

- [Creative Expression Activity: Windsocks](#)





Getting Ready for the Week

This week in centers, children get to explore and discuss the signs of spring in their communities as well as in other regions of the country. This guide includes several experiences to help your child explore the spring season 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 preschool and pre-Kindergarten blends active experiences with more low-key lessons. We suggest ways to incorporate independent play within a daily schedule that offers children comforting routine by alternating between family activities and solo activities. And as always, the guide makes connection between everyday tasks like cutting sandwiches and zipping up jackets and educational areas like math and motor skills.

Our activities for this age group include:

- Tips on how to “Think Like a Teacher”
- Opportunities to work on social emotional learning, and we’ve even included some Learning Adventures content.
- How to incorporate age-appropriate screen time through apps, videos, etc.
- Recommendations for choosing books that reinforce the theme (at-home, e-books).
- Self-directed learning activities for children.
- Tips on mixing it up by adding mindfulness to active activities and movement to more sedentary activities.



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!

- [Brown play dough](#)
- Birthday candles, 5 (small twigs, sticks, or craft sticks can be used instead)
- Index cards, 6
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Child-size scissors
- Colored cardstock or heavy construction paper
- Crepe paper or strips of tissue paper
- Glue
- Yarn or string
- Sidewalk chalk or masking tape
- Piece of scrap paper
- Pencil
- [Video link](#) to the book *Jan Ran* by Lyssa Horvath, illustrated by Krista Martenson
- [Video link](#) to the storybook and song “Five Little Ducks Went Swimming One Day”
- Clear plastic bottle, empty and clean with labels removed
- fizzing tablet, such as an Alka Seltzer® tablet
- food coloring
- vegetable or olive oil
- water
- flashlight (optional)
- Sink that your child can safely reach, with or without assistance
- hand soap
- clean paper towel or hand towel
- [lyrics to “The Hand Washing Song”](#)



How to Think Like a Teacher: Learning Happens Everywhere

Children may be out of school but learning never stops. In fact, every moment of your child's day is full of opportunities to learn. Check out these resources to help you spot- and make the most of- these "teachable moments."

How Children Learn Check out this [video](#) from Harvard's Center on the Developing Child to learn why experiences are so important to your child's development, no matter where they happen.

3 Surprising Ways that Children Learn Children learn through experiences, even the ones you might not expect. Here are three types of experiences you can pay attention to as you look for teachable moments with your child.

- 1. Challenging behavior:** Some of the things that frustrate us the most are actually children exploring the world around them. Think about it: Flinging peas across the table with a spoon? That's science! Literally climbing up the walls? That's physical development! Does that mean you should initiate a food fight at lunch or turn your living room into a jungle gym? Probably not. But you can re-frame the way you look at these behaviors to see them not as random acts meant to drive you crazy, but instead as learning in action. Once you see the underlying skill that your child is working on with their behavior, you can look for creative- and appropriate- opportunities for them to learn it.
- 2. Trying things that are "too hard":** We all get frustrated when faced with a really difficult task, and children are no exception. But doing something that's incredibly easy poses a different problem: Boredom. What's the sweet spot? Things your child can do, with your help. Don't be afraid to challenge your child's abilities. Instead, pay attention to what they can already do with ease and what's still too hard for them to do on their own. Then, when you have time, work with them to practice the skills that will help them accomplish the task by themselves. These kinds of experiences build connections in your child's brain and strengthen their connection with you- a powerful combination when it comes to learning!
- 3. Quiet Moments:** All experiences are teachable moments, even those without big body movements or materials like toys and art supplies. Slowing down, taking a few deep breaths, and paying attention to how their body feels can help your child learn to focus, self-regulate, and be aware of their own feelings. Check out our daily Social and Emotional Resources to learn how you can incorporate mindfulness into your child's everyday life.

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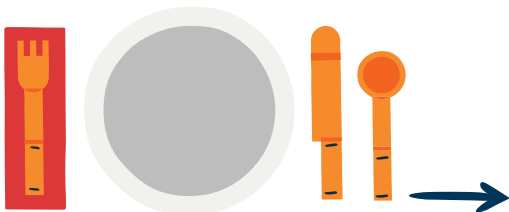
Interactive Learning Activity - What Are They Learning?

Children learn from every experience, even the most routine ones. Check out the examples below of everyday activities. Think about what children might be learning, and how you can find other ways for them to practice those skills. Then fill in the missing examples for your child.

What are they doing?

What skills are they learning?

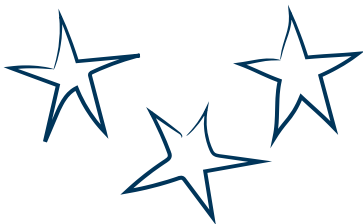
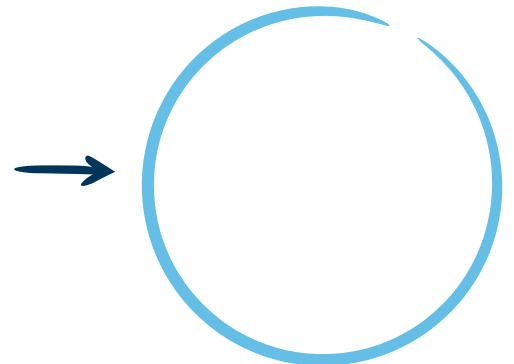
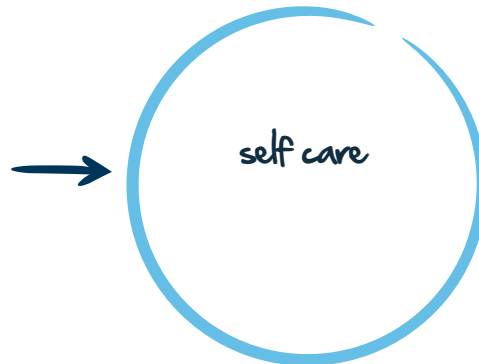
How can I find ways to help them practice?



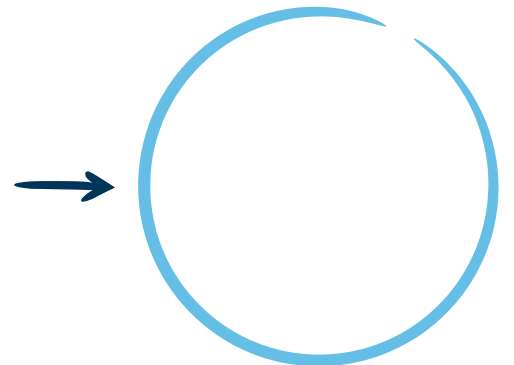
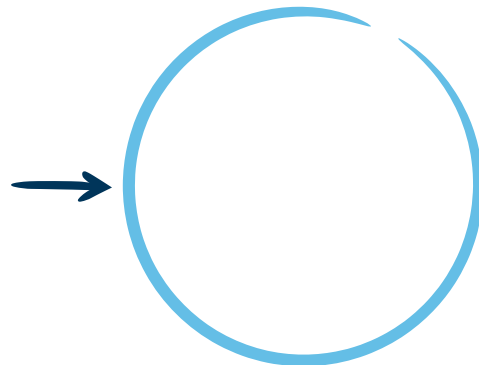
Meal Time



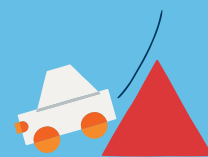
Getting Dressed



Going to Sleep



Try It! This week, spend 1 minute watching your child during a time where it seems like nothing much is going on. Take a closer look- what are they really doing? How can you find even more ways to practice the skill they're working on?



Daily Routines

From our tiny babies to our big kids, consistent, predictable routines will help everyone, including grownups, find some stability and sense of order in such unpredictable times. Here's a simple sample schedule you can modify in the way that feels right for your family and an example of an engaging routine in-line with what your child would be doing in their center!

Children thrive on predictability and consistency which will help you manage long days at home and even get some work done!

Routine to focus on: Good Morning!

While not much feels "normal" right now, maintaining as many of our normal routines as possible will help us all feel like some things are still the same. While making every day pajama day might sound appealing, following a consistent morning routine will help get each day off to a great start. Waking up at their regular time, having breakfast, brushing teeth and getting dressed will let your child know that even when big changes happen, some things also stay the same.

TIME	CHILD	CAREGIVER
8:00–9:00 a.m.	Morning routine: Breakfast, brush teeth, get dressed	Help your child through your morning routine as needed, stealing a few minutes to check emails and calendar over breakfast. While you have some extra time in the mornings, allow your kiddo to spend some time working on emerging self-care skills like dressing themselves and mastering snaps and buttons.
9:00–10:00 a.m.	Play time	Play time! Look for activities that will be easy to do if you have to take a call – don't worry, we've provided suggestions.
10:00–10:15 a.m.	Snack time	Snack time! Involve your child by counting crackers together or allowing them to place slices of cheese on top of crackers.
10:15–11:30 a.m.	Play time	Play time! Look for activities that will be easy to do if you have to take a call or activities you know your child can enjoy independently. It also might be the right time for an educational video or an episode of a favorite cartoon.
11:30 a.m.–noon	Lunch	In their center your kiddo would be helping to set the table, so they can do the same at home! Giving your child a role to play in these types of routines not only gives them something to do, but it also teaches them about working together and caring for themselves and others.

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TIME	CHILD	CAREGIVER
noon–3:00 p.m.	Nap time	Nap time for little one. It may be tempting to join them, but this is also your moment to get some work done uninterrupted.
3:00–5:00 p.m.	Snack and Play	One more snack, a bit more play, and you and your kiddo have just about made it through the day!

Everyday Learning Experiences: Weather Report

In the Spring, the weather can be unpredictable! Even though we're stuck inside, we can still keep tabs on what's happening outdoors. Step outside or look through the window with your child and ask them what they can tell about the weather. Is it sunny or gray? Does it look warm or cold? You can even chart the weather from day to day keeping track of how the weather changes over the course of the week.

Outside Resources

How are clouds made? What's inside of them? What do they have to do with the weather? On top of your day job, staying home probably has you playing the role of chef, teacher, barber, and plumber. Leave the meteorology to PBS and this fun video! Resource: [Clouds and Weather](#)

Virtual Field Trip

[Phipps Conservatory Online Tour](#)

Social and Emotional Resources

Learning Routines

Opportunities to teach social and emotional skills are intertwined in everything that we do. Relationships and repetition are key ingredients for learning any skill. Routines give children a sense of security and helps them learn self-control, positive behaviors, and social skills.

TRY THIS: Create a consistent hand washing routine. Teach your child appropriate times to wash and how to wash the tops and bottoms of their hands. Practice washing hands while singing to the tune of their favorite songs or chants. Be sure it lasts 20 seconds or more. Ex. We will, we will, wash you. Repeat 3x.

Reading Behavior Cues

Spending more time at home than usual may lead to new behavior issues or intensify current concerns. Since behavior is a form of communication, it's important to observe your children closely to understand the meaning behind their big feelings. Reading behavior cues is the key to understanding your child's behavior.

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TRY THIS: Identify what happens right before your child's behavior issue to find out what triggered the emotional response. Think about things such as time of day, temperature, boredom, yawning, and hunger.

Exploration Space

Setting up an engaging and safe space for independent exploration and movement is not only helpful in building confidence in your child but offers you an opportunity to engage in online meetings, prepare meals, complete other tasks on your to-do list or take a much-needed break.

TRY THIS: Fill a bin with a few toys and soft objects in an open space for free movement. This bin can be filled with a new set of toys to play with each day to create excitement around playtime.

Development of Play

Play nurtures your child's development and offers them the opportunity to test their ideas and learn new skills. Learn more about the power of play [here](#).

TRY THIS: Schedule a daily family play date. This can be for any length of time. Let your child take the lead and watch as they use their imagination while you play along. Knowing that there is time dedicated to play as a family can be helpful with limiting interruptions when you're busy.

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is simply taking a moment to slow down and notice what your mind is doing and how your body feels. By noticing these things children can begin to create space between strong emotions and their actions.

TRY THIS: Have a mindful snack and encourage your child to chew slowly while they describe the color, smell, texture, and taste of the food. If you are feeding your child, take a moment to describe the food to them.



Monday, March 30, 2020

Physical Development and Wellness Activity: Puddle Jumping

Length of activity: 10 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: Low to Medium

What you need: Sidewalk chalk or masking tape

What you do: Invite your child to help you outline the shapes of 8-10 puddles on the sidewalk using chalk, or on the floor using masking tape. The puddles can be in a line, in a circle, or clustered together, and should be close enough that your child can safely jump from one puddle to the next. Invite your child to jump from one puddle to the next. Invite your child to explore other ways of moving from one puddle to the next.

What your child is learning: When determining where the puddles are placed, your child is working on their planning and organizing skills, as well as using problem solving skills to determine if puddles are too far apart and how to solve that problem. As they jump from one puddle to the next, your child is working on large-motor skills, including jumping and balance.

If your child is ready: Invite your child to count the puddles as they jump from one to the next.

Jan Ran Read Aloud and the /a/ Sound (Phonics Adventures)

Length of activity: 5-10 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: High

What you need: Piece of scrap paper, pencil, and [video link](#) to the book *Jan Ran* by Lyssa Horvath, illustrated by Krista Martenson

What you do: With your child watching, write an uppercase and lowercase letter A on paper (your child can do this, if they already know how to). Explain that the letter A makes the /a/ sound, like the sound you might make when you are trying to catch raindrops in your mouth. "Let's touch our own throats while we say /a/ and pretend to catch raindrops... That vibration you feel is your vocal cords working to make the sound!"

Tell your child that the book they are going to hear has lots of words with the /a/ sound in them. Play the video and invite your child to watch along as the book is read aloud. After viewing, help your child recall the characters and what happened.

If you like, you can mute the audio while you play the video and read the book aloud yourself. Or if your child is ready, you can take turns reading every other page.

Home Learning Guide for Preschoolers

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Questions to ask:

- ❑ What sound does letter A make? / What letter makes the /a/ sound?
- ❑ What are some of the words you heard in the story that have the /a/ sound in them?

What your child is learning:

- ❑ Name and shapes of uppercase and lowercase A in print
- ❑ Saying the /a/ sound and hearing it in words

Tuesday, March 31, 2020

Language and Literacy Activity: Play-Dough Mud Letters

Length of activity: 10–15 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: Low to medium

What you need: Brown play dough (if you do not have play dough, you and your child can use this recipe to make your own)

Play dough Recipe

Ingredients:

- ❑ 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- ❑ 4 teaspoons cream of tartar
- ❑ 2 cups flour
- ❑ 1 cup salt
- ❑ 1 cup hot water
- ❑ Food coloring, brown (made by mixing red and green)

Instructions: Combine all ingredients and mix well. Store in an airtight container.

What you do: Invite your child to use the play dough to make letters. Begin by having them make the first letter of their first name, and then encourage them to make other letters they are familiar with. Encourage them to make letters using different techniques, such as rolling out 'snakes' and then forming letters, by building the letters one piece of play dough at a time, or by rolling out the play dough and writing the letters in the dough with their finger.

What your child is learning: As your child carefully shapes and molds each letter, they are practicing how to identify and name letters out of sequence and how to make 3D artwork.



If your child is ready: Invite your child to write words using the play dough, such as their first name or using inventive spelling to write other words they are familiar with. Encourage your child to use inventive spelling and to share the words they have written with you.

“The Hand Washing Song” (Cooking Academy)

Length of activity: 3-5 minutes

Level of engagement required by adult: High

What you need:

- Sink that your child can safely reach, with or without assistance
- hand soap
- clean paper towel or hand towel
- lyrics to “The Hand Washing Song”

“The Hand Washing Song”

(sung to the tune of “Row, Row, Row, Your Boat”)

Wet, wet, wet your hands,
Get both palms and tops.
Now cover them with sudsy soap,
But it’s not time to stop!

Wash, wash, wash your hands.
Scrub those germs away.
Now rinse your hands with water,
And “Goodbye, germs!” you’ll say!

Dry, dry, dry, your hands,
With paper towels, and
Turn off the faucet with the towels,
Then toss in a trash can!

What you do: At a time that you would normally have your child wash their hands, like before helping to prepare food or eating, tell your child that you learned a new hand washing song and would like to share it with them.

Slowly sing “The Hand Washing Song” while demonstrating the actions in the song. The actual hand washing should take about 20 seconds.

Next, encourage your child to slowly sing the same song with you while they complete the actions in the song. Again, the actual washing should take about 20 seconds.



Questions to ask:

- ❑ Why is it important for you to scrub your hands for so long?
- ❑ Why is it important to scrub your hands and not just rinse them?
- ❑ What do you think the soap bubbles are doing while you wash your hands?
- ❑ Why do you think the song tells you to turn the faucet off with a towel?
- ❑ When are other good times to wash our hands throughout the day?

What your child is learning:

- ❑ The proper steps for hand washing
- ❑ How long to wash hands before they are fully clean

Wednesday, April 1, 2020

Cognitive Development Activity: Mud-Cake Math: Addition

Length of activity: 10 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: Low to medium

What you need:

- ❑ Birthday candles, 5 (small twigs, sticks, or craft sticks can be used instead)
- ❑ Brown play dough (if you do not have play dough, you and your child can use the recipe on [page 9](#) to make your own)

What you do: Have your child make two “cakes” using the play dough. Ask them to place a combination of birthday candles in each cake, and then count the total number of candles they used. For example, they can place 2 candles in one cake and 1 candle in the other cake, for a total of 3 candles. The total number of candles should not exceed 5. Reinforce the addition process by stating the math sentence for the problem they are solving, for example, “You had 2 candles, you added 1 more candle, and now you have a total of 3 candles.”

What your child is learning: Through this activity, your child is gaining mathematical skills in addition and subtraction, as well as practicing fine motor skills by grasping candles or twigs while counting. This activity also offers opportunities to build attention skills as they listen closely to the number combinations you ask for.

If your child is ready: Invite your child to share the math sentence for the problem they are solving.



Water Fireworks (STEM Innovators)

Length of activity: 10–15 minutes

Level of engagement required by adult: High

What you need:

- ❑ Clear plastic bottle, empty and clean with labels removed
- ❑ fizzing tablet, such as an Alka Seltzer® tablet
- ❑ food coloring, vegetable or olive oil
- ❑ water
- ❑ flashlight (optional)

What you do:

Fill the bottle $\frac{1}{4}$ full with water. Add 8–10 drops of food coloring and gently shake the bottle to mix the food coloring and water.

Add vegetable or olive oil to the bottle, leaving an inch or two of empty space at the top.

Break the fizzing tablet in half and drop one half into the bottle. The fizzing tablet will sink to the bottom and start the fireworks show! To keep the effect going, add the other half of the tablet. If you want a real lava-lamp effect, dim the lights and shine a flashlight through the bottle.

After doing this activity together, dispose of the mixture right away. It's pretty to look at, but not good to drink!

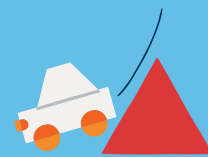
Questions to ask your budding scientist:

- ❑ What will happen when we drop the tablet in the bottle? (predict)
- ❑ Describe each liquid... (observe and compare)
- ❑ How can you use the lava lamp? (invent)

What your child is learning:

- ❑ STEM mindsets of wonder and observation
- ❑ Properties of various liquids

The science behind it: Oil isn't as dense as water, so when oil is poured onto water, it floats on the top of the water. Food coloring is water-based, meaning it has a greater density than oil, too. When drops of food coloring are added on top of the oil, they sink through the oil and mix into the water below, causing a watery explosion.



Thursday, April 2, 2020

Executive Function Activity: Rainbow Matching

Length of activity: 5–10 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: Low to medium

What you need:

- ☐ Index cards, 6
- ☐ Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- ☐ Scissors

What you do: Cut each index card in half widthwise to make two smaller cards. Create two cards for each color: red, orange, yellow, blue, green, and purple.

Show your child how to shuffle the cards and place them each face down in a playing area. Invite your child to select two cards to turn over. If the colors of the cards match, remove them from the game. If the colors do not match, flip them over and try again. Encourage your child to continue until they have matched all the cards.

What your child is learning: This activity supports the growth of memory and provides an opportunity to build attention skills as your child recalls where matching colors are located. Your child will also gain persistence as you encourage them to keep trying until they match all cards.

If your child is ready: Create additional cards for the colors white, black, brown, and purple and add them to the game.

“Five Little Ducks Went Swimming One Day” (Music Explorers)

Length of activity: 3–5 minutes

Level of engagement required by adult: Low

What you need: [Video link](#) to the storybook and song “Five Little Ducks Went Swimming One Day”

What you do: Play the video and invite your child to watch along as the book is read aloud. After viewing, help your child recall the characters and what happened. Next, you can mute the audio while you play the song and encourage your child to dance.



Questions to Ask:

- ❑ Who were the characters in the story?
- ❑ What were each of the ducks doing?
- ❑ Where did the ducks go?
- ❑ How did you feel when the ducks came back?
- ❑ How does the music make you feel?
- ❑ How can you dance to this music?
- ❑ How can you sing along to the music?

What your child is learning:

- ❑ Counting forward and back
- ❑ Connection that can exist between a song and a book
- ❑ Moving creatively to music

Friday, April 3, 2020

Creative Expression Activity: Windsocks

Length of activity: 10–15 minutes

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: Low to Medium

What you need:

- ❑ Child-size scissors
- ❑ Colored cardstock or heavy construction paper
- ❑ Crepe paper or strips of tissue paper
- ❑ Glue
- ❑ Yarn or string



What you do: Show your child a windsock, or the above picture of a windsock. Invite your child to share observations about the windsock and what they think happens to it in the wind. Show your child the materials and ask them how they could use the materials to make a windsock. Assist your child as needed in carrying out their idea.

What your child is learning: Your child is gaining observational and organizational skills as they ask questions and manipulate materials throughout this activity. They are also learning how to make 3D artwork using the mixed media of everyday items like paper, yarn, and glue.

If your child is ready: Instead of gathering materials to make the windsock ahead of time, after you talk about a windsock, invite your child to collect materials they would like to use to create their windsock. The two of you can look for a variety of household items that could be used, such as cardboard tubes, newspaper, ribbons, or fabric scraps.