

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

MAY 2016

READING

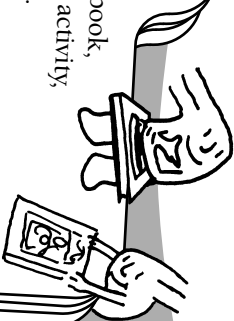
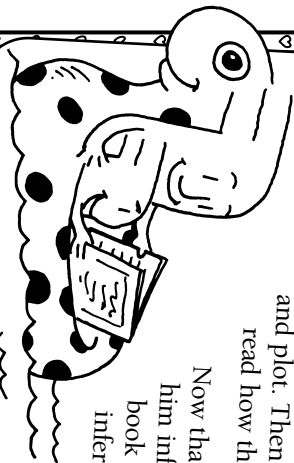
Figure out the plot

If your youngster reads the first and last pages of a book, can he tell what happened in the middle? With this activity, he'll *infer*—or make conclusions based on evidence.

Ingredients: picture book

Choose a book your child hasn't read. Have him read the first two pages and describe what is happening so far: the characters, settings, and plot. Then, he could turn to the last two pages to read how the story ends.

Now that he knows the beginning and end, let him infer how the story unfolded. Read the book aloud to see how close he came to inferring the actual story. Which clues led to predictions that panned out, and which ones led him astray?



WORD PROBLEMS

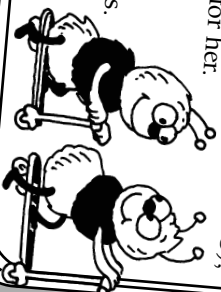
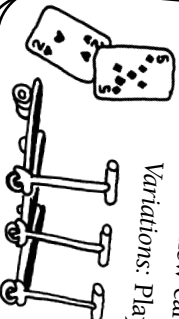
Deal the cards

Build math skills by making up story problems for each other to solve.

Ingredients: deck of playing cards (face cards removed, ace = 1), paper, pencil

Stack the cards facedown. Let your child draw two cards and use them to create an addition or a subtraction word problem. If she gets 5 and 2, she might say, "Five scooters were parked. Two kids rode their scooters away. How many scooters are left?" Solve the problem ($5 - 2 = 3$), and then draw two new cards to make a word problem for her.

Variations: Play by drawing four cards and creating problems with 1-, 2-, or 3-digit numbers. Or make multiplication and division problems.



SCIENCE

Water: Moving on up

Watch with your child as liquid apparently defies gravity!

Ingredients: 3 clear glasses, water, red and blue food coloring, paper towels

Let your youngster fill two glasses with water, add red coloring to one, and put blue coloring in the other. Have him line up the three glasses with the empty one in the center. Next, he should roll two paper towels into tubes—placing one end of each into the empty glass and the opposite end of each into a glass of colored water.

What happens? Water moves up each paper towel and deposits colored water into the center glass, where it will mix into purple water. A force called *capillary action* draws the liquids up. *Real-world fact:* This is how plants and trees get nourishment—water is carried from roots up into the plant.



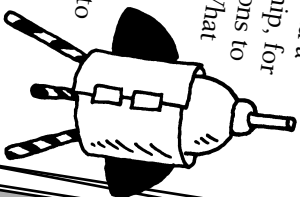
POETRY

Write a triangle-shaped poem. Start with a two-word line ("Pool time") in the top center of a horizontal sheet of paper. Your child adds a three-word line: "I love swimming!" Take turns, adding one more word per line until the paper is full. Listen as he reads the poem aloud.



ENGINEERING

Suggest that your youngster create something using "loose parts" like fabric pieces, paper, or wood scraps. She might build a catapult or a spaceship, for example. Ask questions to get her thinking. ("What will this part do?") Instead of offering solutions, let her use problem-solving skills to design, test, redesign, and retest.



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Character Corner

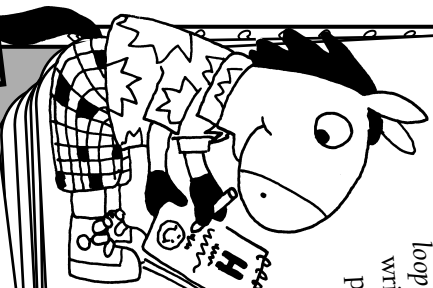
VOCABULARY My hobby dictionary

Does your child have a passion for bracelet-making or a fascination with horses? Suggest making or a dictionary to go along with it that she create a dictionary to go along with it.

Ingredients: small notebook, pencil, crayons

Let your youngster write each letter of the alphabet at the top of a separate page in her notebook. Then, ask her to think of words that match her hobby. If she makes bracelets, she might come up with *loop, knot, and clasp*. She can write each word on the matching page (L, K, C), add its definition, and illustrate it.

Encourage her to put new words in her dictionary as she learns them. And when she develops new hobbies, she could make new dictionaries.



OPPOSITES

Race to find the opposite word! 10 On 20 index cards, your child writes 10 pairs of opposites (smooth on one card, bumpy on another). She places a card from every pair at one end of the yard. Stand at the other end, and deal a remaining card to each player. On "go," run to retrieve your cards opposite and return to the start line. Deal another card, and play again.

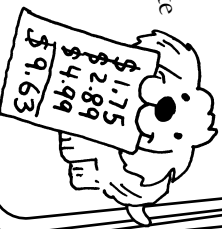
COLLABORATION

It's fun to collaborate on a puzzle with 100, 500, or even 1,000 pieces. Before you begin, join forces to come up with a plan (find the corner and edge pieces, sort pieces into piles according to color, have each person work on a section). Then, use your plan to work on the puzzle together.



DECIMALS

Let your youngster imagine he has \$25 to spend on a pet. He can use a pet store circular (or visit the pet store) and pencil and paper to calculate what he could buy. He'll need to line up the decimals carefully to find the total.



Congratulations!

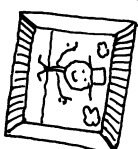
We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

PRIDE IN WORK

Tell your child that each Friday you'll display a piece of that week's work he feels proud of. Over dinner, have him discuss candidates he's considering. You'll encourage him to produce work that he'll be proud for all to see.



INITIATIVE

Create a monthly "project list" that everyone contributes to. **Examples:** Make a family photo album, organize a bookcase. Hang the list. Let family members choose tasks and check each off when completed.

FRIENDSHIP

Your youngster will learn what matters most in friendship by discovering what others value. Make a friendship tree. Each person adds a leaf naming qualities she appreciates about various friends (flexible, full of fun ideas). How large will your tree grow?



HEALTH

Show your child how easy it is to spread germs—and why it's important to wash on his hands. Let him sprinkle "germs" (flour) your hand and touch things in the kitchen (refrigerator, chair). Where did his "germs" spread? Now, he can wash his hands and repeat. He'll see no traces of germs this time.

