

# The More, the Better

## Primary Objectives

20b. Quantifies

## Why It's Important

This activity will support your child's growing ability to compare the quantities of small groups of objects and correctly use comparison words, such as more and less. Becoming more aware of "number" words will help him begin to use comparison words in daily conversation.

## Materials

Paper; glue; small objects (rocks, paper clips, beanbags, seashells, etc.); two small jars or clear cups; cotton balls

## What You Do

1. Before you begin, place six cotton balls in a small jar. Fill another jar with ten cotton balls. Place the jars on two separate pieces of paper.
2. Invite your child to explore the jars and guess which jar holds more cotton balls. Write the words *more* and *less* on the jars he designates.
3. Explain that he can check his prediction. Encourage him to empty one of the jars and glue the cotton balls on the paper. Ask him to count the cotton balls. Write the number of cotton balls on the bottom of the paper.
4. Repeat with the other jar. Provide assistance, if needed, as he counts and glues the cotton balls.
5. Once your child has counted both sets of cotton balls, ask him which paper has more and which has less.
6. Continue the activity for as long as he is interested. You can vary the game by using collections of other small objects.

# Word Field Trip

## Primary Objectives

- 4. Demonstrates traveling skills
- 17b. Uses print concepts

## Why It's Important

Going on outings to different kinds of places can be an exciting way for your child to learn to read, recognize, and understand the words he sees around him. It also shows him the important role that words play in his physical environment.

## Materials

Camera

## What You Do

1. Invite your child to join you on a Word Field Trip. Explain that you will be taking a walk and looking for words as you go.
2. As you walk along on your trip around the neighborhood, zoo, park, store, etc., point out some of the words you see. *I see a sign that says one way. That means people driving on this street can go in this direction only.*
3. Encourage your child to look for signs. Take pictures of the words he finds, including both familiar words and new ones.
4. When you return from your field trip, encourage your child to remember a few of the words he recognized and learned.
5. Use the pictures as a later time to recall the words you saw. *Do you remember what this word is? What does this sign mean?*
6. Allow your child to look at the pictures on his own and practice reading them.

# Color Search

## Primary Objectives

- 4. Demonstrates traveling skills
- 11b. Persists

## Why It's Important

Children sometimes need encouragement to continue a task that is challenging. Offering your child activities that require her to be persistent in order to reach a goal gives her the opportunity to see the benefit of staying the course. Guiding your child's learning with questions and comments shows her that she is supported throughout the experience.

## Materials

Colored construction paper; index cards; stapler; tape

## What You Do

1. Create color cards by cutting out different colors of construction paper and attaching one color to each index card.
2. Invite your child to go on a color hunt. Hold up one of the color cards and ask your child to identify it. Explain that she will be searching around the room for objects that are the same color as the card.
3. If needed, allow your child to carry the card with her as she moves around the room. Offer encouragement so that your child feels supported during her search. *Here's a red crayon. Do you see anything else that is red on the bookshelf?*
4. Continue the activity by asking your child to search for a new color, or invite her to find a certain number of items. How many blue things do you think you can find?
5. When she is finished searching, invite her to talk about all of the places in the room she found the objects. *Where did you look for things that are yellow? What did you do when you didn't find anything yellow in the kitchen?*
6. Invite your child to go on a color search with her friends or family members at a later time.

# Making My Name

## Primary Objectives

16a. Identifies and names letters

## Why It's Important

For many young children, the letters in their names are the first letters they recognize and the most important to them. Activities built around your child's name are meaningful and fun, and they promote his knowledge of the alphabet in a personal way.

## Materials

Envelopes; markers; letter manipulatives or small cards with one letter on each that spells your child's name

## What You Do

1. Place the letters inside the envelope. Write your child's name on the outside of the envelope.
2. Invite your child to spell his name with you. Show him the envelope with his name printed on the front. Explain that the letters inside are the letters he will need to spell his name.
3. Have your child take the letters out of the envelope, one at a time. Encourage him to identify each letter he sees.
4. After he has taken out all of the letters, explain that he can use his printed name on the front of the envelope as a guide to help him spell his name.
5. Encourage him to arrange the letters in the correct order. When he is finished, review the name and match it to the front of the envelope.
6. Let him know that he may use the envelope and letters to share the activity with a friend or family member at a later time.

# Sorting Game

## Primary Objectives

13. Uses classification skills

## Why It's Important

Children may notice differences between objects but may not be given opportunities to put their observations into words. Giving your child a set of objects to sort and then asking her to talk about the groupings helps her think purposefully about the similarities and differences between the objects.

## Materials

Cardboard box; set of large and small matching objects

## What You Do

1. Place the sets of small and large objects in the box. Invite your child to look through the objects and talk about what she finds.
2. Ask your child to think of a way to group the objects. Prompt her to discuss the options for creating groups. *How could we put these objects into different piles? What do you notice about them that is alike? What is different?*
3. Offer assistance as needed as she sorts the objects. Allow her to be creative in how she creates her groups.
4. When she is finished, encourage your child to talk about how she grouped the objects. Ask questions that help her think of the process she used to separate the items into groups. *I see you have three piles. How did you decide what to put in each one?*
5. Continue the activity for as long as your child is interested.

# I'll Make Dinner

## Primary Objectives

14b. Engages in sociodramatic play

## Why It's Important

Acting out pretend roles not only encourages your child to explore his surroundings, but it also builds his confidence in participating in everyday situations. In the same way that role-playing allows your child to express his feelings in a safe environment, imitating adult activities and taking on new roles develops his understanding of his home and classroom experiences.

## Materials

Pretend kitchen materials

## What You Do

1. Make sure the play area or kitchen is equipped with basic kitchen supplies that are easily accessible to your child.
2. Invite your child to join you in this dramatic play. Ask him if he would like to prepare dinner for you.
3. Allow him to guide the activity by choosing what meal to prepare, what dishes to use, etc. Offer limited input for his choices.
4. Encourage his play by talking about what you see. *I see that you are making spaghetti. That looks delicious!*
5. As he serves the meal to you, express gratitude and pretend to eat the food. Invite him to describe what he made and join you as you eat.
6. After the meal, help him clean up the kitchen by putting food and dishes where they belong. Let him know that you enjoyed the meal. Invite him to cook for you again in the future.
7. You can extend this activity by encouraging your child to pretend he is preparing food in a restaurant. He can use paper and crayons to create a menu of meal choices.

# Creating a Job Chart

## Primary Objectives

- 17b. Uses print concepts
- 18b. Uses emergent reading skills

## Why It's Important

Children pay attention to print when it has function and purpose. Providing activities in which your child can use his name in meaningful ways helps him use emergent reading skills as he begins to understand how print works.

## Materials

Your child's name and friends' or family members' names written on small index cards; job chart with room to attach names next to each job

## What You Do

1. Ask your child to help you make a list of jobs that he and other family members could do during the day.
2. As he names jobs, write them down on the job chart.
3. Talk about the job names with your child, pointing out features of print. *The word table starts with T. There are three words in the phrase Feed the cat.*
4. Ask your child to select a job and place his name card next to it. Give him time to use his emerging reading skills to read the name of the job he wants.
5. Continue the process with your child and other family members, pointing out features such as length of job names, length of children's names, lowercase and uppercase letters, and the number of words in the job names.
6. Decide with your child how often the names will be changed. *Should we do a different job each day?*
7. To extend this activity, encourage your child to try to read any other names on the job chart. *How are these names the same? How are they different?*

# Writing Tools

## Primary Objectives

7b. Uses writing and drawing tools

## Why It's Important

Young children are often fascinated by writing and the tools people use to write. Children first learn about writing when they see it around them and when they observe people using writing in everyday activities. Providing paper and a variety of writing tools will encourage your child to tap in to her natural interest in writing.

## Materials

Paper; markers, pens, pencils, or other writing tools

## What You Do

1. Make paper and writing tools available to your child throughout the day.
2. Observe how she interacts with any new or unfamiliar writing and drawing tools.
3. Invite her to choose a piece of paper and begin experimenting with the different writing tools. Talk to her about the various marks that they make. *I see you are using the blue marker. It is making a thick line on your paper.*
4. Ask your child to tell you about what she writes or draws. If she wants you to, write down her words below her creation. *What can you tell me about your picture? How did you make that circle?*
5. Invite your child to hang her picture on the wall so that she can share it with others.
6. You can extend this activity by pointing out unconventional writing and drawing tools throughout the day. For example, when on the playground, show your child how to use a stick or her finger to draw in the sand.



# What's the Surprise?

## Primary Objectives

11d. Shows curiosity and motivation

## Why It's Important

Children love surprises! Guessing games provide a good opportunity to challenge your child's thinking and help her learn to obtain information by asking questions.

## Materials

Small objects (rocks, paper clips, beanbags, seashells, etc.); pillowcase or bag

## What You Do

1. Choose objects that might be interesting to your child such as a seashell, new book, or new dramatic play prop. Make sure to select a range of objects, including some that are simple and others that will be more challenging for her to guess as the activity is repeated.
2. Choose one object to begin the game and put it in the pillowcase or bag without showing it to your child.
3. Explain that she will ask questions to figure out what you have put in the bag. Encourage her to pose questions such as *Is it round? Is it kept inside or outside?*
4. Comment on your child's questions, and as the game continues, remind her of what information she already knows. *You have asked about the shape and color of the object. Now you know that it is round and red.*
5. When your child correctly identifies the object, take it out of the bag and talk about all of the attributes she determined with her questions.
6. If you feel that she has a good understanding of what types of questions to ask, you may wish to play again with a more challenging object.

# Question of the Day

## Primary Objectives

- 9b. Speaks clearly
- 11d. Shows curiosity and motivation

## Why It's Important

Children are naturally curious. They learn about the world around them through observation, inquiry, and interaction. Giving your child opportunities to ask questions about his interests promotes language and understanding of new concepts.

## Materials

Paper; markers, pens, pencils, or other writing tools

## What You Do

1. Explain to your child that each day, he may ask you one special question.
2. Encourage your child to think about the special question he wants to ask you today. Give him time to put it into words. Listen to his question without interrupting him.
3. Offer prompts if your child is having difficulty thinking of a question: *If you would like to know what we are going to do today, you could ask me, "What are we going to do today?"*
4. Make sure to give your child an answer to his question.
5. Write your child's question on paper as he says it to you. Then write your answer and read to him what you have written, pointing to the words as you read.

# Action Charades

## Primary Objectives

14b. Engages in sociodramatic play

## Why It's Important

As your child begins to explore taking on pretend roles and actions during dramatic play, she may need help deciding what roles to act out. Interacting with her as she pretends gives her an opportunity to discuss ideas for her pretend roles.

## Materials

Photos or drawings of people or animals depicting specific motions such as jumping, talking on the phone, drinking from a cup, crouching like a tiger, stretching, saluting, etc.

## What You Do

1. Choose a large area in your home for this activity so that your child can move freely in the space, or do this activity outside.
2. Invite your child to play charades with you. Explain that you will hold up a picture, and she will act out the movement she sees.
3. Assist her as necessary by describing or demonstrating the movement. *What is the monkey in this picture doing? Yes, he's eating a banana. Can you show me how you would peel a banana and eat it?*
4. Offer encouragement by describing what you see your child doing. *You are reaching your arms in the air just like the boy in the picture. You look like you can almost touch the clouds!*
5. As your child completes each movement, display the picture in a space where she can see it. Encourage her to look at the pictures and act out the movements at a later time.

## **Additional Pre-K Online Resources –**

<https://rangerrick.org/crafts-activities/>

<https://mommypoppins.com/newyorkcitykids/25-exercise-games-indoor-activities-for-kids>

<https://www.sesamestreet.org/>

<https://pbskids.org/games/math/>

<https://www.education.com/games/preschool/math/>

[http://www.janbrett.com/activities\\_pages.htm](http://www.janbrett.com/activities_pages.htm)

<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/family.html>