

Recipes for Success

Practical Activities to Help Your Child Succeed

NOVEMBER 2016

Refrigerator Poster

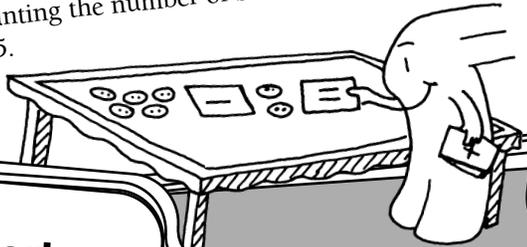
Just hang your *Recipes* poster on the refrigerator and sneak in an activity when you have a few minutes. These fun activities will help develop school success and positive behavior. Check off each box as you complete the "recipe."

WORD PROBLEMS It's easy to see

Let your child put together her own "word problem kit" to make story problems easier to understand and solve.

Ingredients: small objects (buttons, coins), container, index cards, pencil

Have your youngster write symbols for math operations (+, -, x, ÷) on separate index cards and place them in the container along with the small objects. Now she can use the kit to solve homework problems or fun word problems that you give each other. *Example:* "Seven monkeys each had 1 banana. Two monkeys ate theirs. How many bananas were left?" Your child might make one group of 7 buttons, move 2 buttons into a separate group, and put the "-" card in between. By counting the number of buttons left, she will solve the problem: $7 - 2 = 5$.



STEM Design a miniature fort

Your youngster can boost critical thinking and engineering skills by creating a mini-fort with household objects.

Ingredients: hole-punch, paper towel or toilet paper tubes, straws, cardboard, scissors, tape

Help your child use a hole-punch to make holes along empty paper towel or toilet paper tubes. Then, he could thread straws through the holes and tape on cardboard pieces to build his fort. Suggest that he experiment with making a two- or three-floor fort. Have him test the "load," or weight, by placing objects on the floors until they collapse. How might he make them stronger? (*Examples:* Tape together cardboard pieces, or reinforce them with duct tape.)



READING Connect with stories

Build your youngster's reading comprehension by encouraging her to connect books to her own life.

Ingredients: notebook, pen, books

Suggest your child start a Story Connections journal with one section for "Characters" and another for "Events." After she finishes reading a chapter or section, she can reflect on how the characters and events relate to her life.

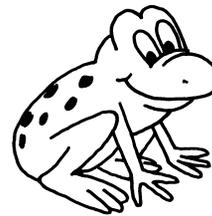
For "Characters," she might imagine she's friends with someone in the story and write about what they have in common (they are both middle children, they like the same sports). Under "Events," she could mention happenings that mirror her experiences (starting a new school, adopting a dog). How many connections can she make for each book she reads?



POETRY

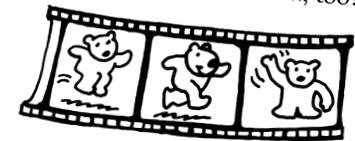
Enjoy poetry together with fun read-alouds. Take turns picking out favorite poems and reading them to each other.

Or read to your youngster while she acts out each line ("I'd rather kiss a frog...").



PATTERNS

Help your child work out his wiggles with patterns. Start with two movements—"jump, jog"—and have him do them over and over for 1 minute. Then, add another movement: "Jump, jog, wave." He will enjoy creating patterns for you to follow, too!



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Character Corner

VOCABULARY That sounds familiar!

Here's a fun way for your child to learn about words with similar meanings by making his own thesaurus.

Ingredients: magazines, photographs, tape, paper, markers

Ask your youngster to gather family photos or cut out interesting pictures from magazines. He can choose one at a time, tape it to the top of a sheet of paper, and write one word describing it.

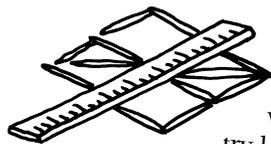
Then, help him add as many similar words as possible. For a penguin crossing the ice, he might write *walking* at the top and below that, *waddling* and *wobbling*.

Suggest that he place the pages in a folder, in ABC order, and add to his thesaurus regularly.



SYMMETRY

Place a ruler on a table. Have your child use toothpicks or dry pasta to create a symmetrical design—each side should be a mirror image of the other. He could place one piece at a time on each side, making sure they're in the same position. Take a



picture so he can remember what symmetry looks like!

RESEARCH

Go on a bug hunt to look for stink bugs, spiders, or other insects. Suggest that your youngster take along paper and sketch the bugs. Then, have her use library books or look online to find out more about each insect.



Congratulations!

We finished _____ activities together on this poster.

Signed (parent or adult family member)

Signed (child)

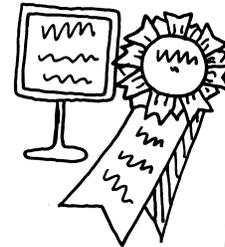
GRAMMAR

Practice parts of speech with fill-in-the-blank stories. Together, create a tale, leaving blank spaces labeled with parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb). Say each category, and write in the word your child supplies. Then, let her read the silly story aloud.



HISTORY

Help your youngster create a museum to celebrate his personal history. He might display the first tooth he lost, a specimen from his rock collection, or a ribbon from a gymnastics competition. He can add a card explaining each item—and then give you a tour!



HONESTY



Teach your child to give an honest response to a question—without hurting someone's feelings. If his friend asks, "Do you like my sweater?" instead of saying, "No," he could say, "It looks comfortable." That way, he's being honest *and* kind.



DEPENDABILITY



Being dependable means people can count on you to do what you say you will

do. Have your youngster keep a list of times she follows through on things, such as returning her brother's game when she promised. How long will her list grow?

RESPECT FOR THE EARTH

Make it a family habit to point out food sources in everyday life, such as cows in a field or an apple tree in a yard. Knowing how the planet gives us what we need can help your child want to take care of it.

