



## Educational Childcare

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COA Families,

At COA we are more than childcare, we are an educational facility. Because we believe education matters, we wanted to come up with a way to keep your children busy and learning while at-home. From our COA family to yours, we are here to offer support during this time with fun activities and links to websites that are offering free learning during school closures.

- 1) Scholastic: <https://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html>
- 2) PBS Kids: <https://pbskids.org/>
- 3) Switcheroo Zoo: <https://switchzoo.com/>
- 4) Fun Brain: <https://www.funbrain.com/>
- 5) Into the Book: <https://reading.ecb.org/>
- 6) Suessville: <https://www.seussville.com/>
- 7) Star Fall: <https://www.starfall.com/h/>
- 8) ABC YA: <https://www.abcya.com/>
- 9) Highlights Kids: <https://www.highlightskids.com/>
- 10) Storyline Online: <https://www.storylineonline.net/>
- 11) National Geo for Kids: <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/>
- 12) The Magic School bus <https://kids.scholastic.com/kids/books/the-magic-school-bus/>
- 13) Virtual Museum Tours:
  - a. <https://kids.sandiegozoo.org/animal-cams-videos>
  - b. <https://nationalzoo.si.edu/webcams>
  - c. <https://www.activewild.com/online-zoo/>

And as always, play along with Bentley through the Children of America website!

<https://www.childrenofamerica.com/bentley.cfm> Read our Bentley books, watch Bentley play and print your own Bentley work pages!



Still bored? Check out our Apple-A-Day blog and try out some of our new favorite recipes!  
<https://blog.childrenofamerica.com/>



Stay healthy and safe,

Your COA Management Team

# INFANTS



## Art, Music and Movement: **Shake it Up**

Bring your infant to a safe space, and tell them that you are going to explore sounds and shakers. Shake the shakers near your infant so they can see and hear them. If your child can hold objects, offer a shaker for them to use. Be sure to have a few shakers prepared, as your child may want to hold one in each hand. Comment on your infant's reaction about the noise produced by the shaker. If your child can't yet hold items, describe the noise the shaker is making when you move it and repeat the sounds that he or she seems to enjoy (e.g., "Your eyes got really big when I shook the shaker"). If your child can hold items, describe how he or she is moving the shaker and the noise that is produced (e.g., "You're holding one shaker in each hand; one shaker makes a very loud noise and one makes a softer noise"). Your infant may enjoy mouthing the shaker, passing the shaker back and forth between hands, shaking one in each hand, and repeating these actions to continue to produce the same noises over and over.

### Children experience:

- Responding to sounds
- Creating sounds and music

To create homemade shakers, choose a variety of different containers like: Plastic eggs, plastic spice jars, formula bottles, plastic baby food containers, travel shampoo containers, or water bottles. Then you can fill each container with something like: fish tank gravel, pennies, sand, beads, rice, beans, screws or nails.



## Communication, Language, and Literacy: **Rhyme Time**

### Children experience:

- Hearing words that rhyme
- Repeating rhyming words and nursery rhymes

Rhyming (words with the same ending sound, e.g., clock and dock) is an important element of learning how to read and sound out words. Playful experiences with rhyming can increase your child's enjoyment and ability to remember new vocabulary and rhyming sounds. To start this activity, let your child know that you will be saying and singing nursery rhymes. Some suggested rhymes to start with include "Hickory, Dickory, Dock,"

"Row, Row, Row Your Boat," "Baa, Baa Black Sheep," "Little Miss Muffet," "Rub-a-Dub-Dub," and "Jack and Jill."

As you say the rhymes, place emphasis on the rhyming words: "Hickory, dickory, dock. The mouse ran up the clock." After you finish the rhyme, point out the words that rhymed: "Dock and clock; those words rhyme!" Drawing children's attention to the rhyming words also helps them catch on to the cadence or rhythm of the rhyme. Repeat each rhyme several times so your child can learn all the words in the rhyme and specifically hear the rhyming words you emphasize. Children may request that you repeat the entire rhyme again, a few words from the rhyme, or the rhyming words. Repetition is important to build familiarity, support interest, and give children an opportunity to join in and spontaneously say rhymes. Acknowledge both common rhyming words and nonsense rhyming words.

# INFANTS



## Early Math and Discovery: Exploring Objects

If your infant can't yet grasp objects, simply hold an interesting toy over their face to watch. An infant who can sit supported but can't grasp objects can watch toys that you hold in each of your hands. Give your child plenty of time to look at a toy and then shake the toy in your other hand.

Children experience:

- Looking at or handling one object and then another
- Gathering three or more objects

If your infant can grasp objects and sit, either with your support or independently, give them a toy to hold and explore a toy. Younger infants may simply hold on to the toy with one hand, while older infants may transfer the toy from one hand to another. Present a new toy and observe what your child does (e.g., they might glance at the new toy but choose to continue exploring the first one or drop the first toy and grab the new one). Older infants will enjoy sitting on the floor with toys spread around them and may reach for and pick up two toys, one in each hand; exploring toys by looking first at one toy and then at the other; or placing one of the toys in their mouth, followed by the other one.

Older infants may start collecting toys and placing several in a pile. When children gather toys or objects in this way, you will know that they can attend to more than one object at a time, which is a milestone in their development.



## Myself and Others: Emotions

Children experience:

- Expressing emotions with their face and/or body
- Initiating physical contact with other people to express emotions

As you spend time with your infant, observe how your child communicates different emotions — by crying, tensing up, smiling, kicking their feet, babbling, laughing, or simply gazing contentedly. Older infants will begin initiating physical contact with others by kissing, patting, hugging, hitting, or even biting. How you respond to your child will depend on their needs, emotions, and developmental level.

When infants cry, they are typically communicating a need. Talk to your child and identify their emotions and needs (e.g., “You’re so sad right now. You have such a hungry tummy”). In doing so, your child learns to be comforted by your voice and physical contact. When infants smile, they are communicating that they are happy and enjoy your company. Smile back, talk to, kiss, and gently touch your child to express that you enjoy their company too. As infants grow, so will their repertoire of emotional expression (e.g., fear, anger, amusement). Pay attention to the cues you receive, and continue doing whatever is amusing your child, or conversely, find a different toy, position/location, or activity if your child shows signs of disinterest.

Older infants will begin initiating physical contact with you and others. Some physical contact infants might initiate may not be

# INFANTS

pleasing; when your child bites you out of anger or frustration, you might feel shocked. It's important to calmly say to your infant something like "You're angry I took that away from you, but it's not safe to chew on." By responding this way, you're acknowledging your infant's anger, naming the emotion, and explaining the reason behind the emotion. This equips infants to deal with emotions in appropriate ways as they develop.



## *Physical Development and Healthy Habits: Kick It*

*For nonmobile infants:* With your infant sitting up or lying down, touch the bottom of your child's feet with the palms of your hands. This will likely result in your child pushing against or kicking your hands.

*For mobile infants:* Choose a space where your infant has room to move, and offer some balls to kick. Accept that your child might instead choose to throw the balls.

### Children experience:

- Stretching their leg muscles and kicking their feet
- Cause and effect – moving their bodies and causing objects to move

Describe your infant's actions. For example, you might say something like, "You're kicking against my hands! Kick, kick!"

*For nonmobile infants:* Repeat this activity with your infant's feet up against a sturdy, padded piece of furniture (e.g., a couch). You can also dangle ribbons or a small blanket near your child's feet for them to kick. Infants will enjoy watching the way the ribbons move and feel them against their feet as they kick. This increases children's awareness of their bodies and different ways they can use them.

*For mobile infants:* Comment on how your child chooses to use the balls, and use them in the same way. Describe how your child is moving their body and the effect those movements have on the ball. For example, you might say, "You swung your leg back and kicked the ball. It rolled all the way over under the window" or "You held the ball in both hands and threw it way up." These comments increase children's awareness of their bodies and the different ways they can use them.

# INFANTS



## Art, Music and Movement: **Sing, Sing, Sing**

Start this activity at any time (i.e., during your infant's alert moments or when having difficulty sleeping). Choose a song to sing based on your child's mood (a quiet lullaby if your child is upset or a song that is more upbeat).

If your infant is upset or trying to go to sleep, softly sing a lullaby or simply repeat his or her name and offer quiet words of assurance in a melodic way. Often, infants will stop crying, calm down, or fall asleep when they hear the soothing sound of a parent's or a familiar caregiver's voice. If your infant is happy, sing a song that is more upbeat or one that includes movements and allows you to make up the words as you go along. For example, you could sing, "If You're Happy and You Know It" and adapt the lyrics as follows: "If you're happy and you know it, nibble Anna's toes..." or "If you're happy and you know it, kiss LeVar's tummy..." An older infant may "sing" with you or join in with some familiar hand or body movements. For example, you might sing and clap, "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands," and your child might clap as well.

When introducing hand and body movements, think about your infant's developmental level and the milestones he or she has already reached, and customize the song to encourage what you know your child can do (e.g., if your child waves "bye-bye," include that as a verse of the song: "If you're happy and you know it, wave bye-bye"). Some other ideas (and you can think of some of your own as well) include: "Lift your arms," "Kick your feet," "Shake your head," "Pound the floor," and "Bounce up and down."

### Children experience:

- Growing calm or becoming alert to sounds, tones, or music
- Responding to other people singing by joining in with vocalizations or motions



## Communication, Language, and Literacy: **Beginning with Books**

### Children experience:

- Touching, grasping, or mouthing books
- Turning the pages of books

Find a cozy place to sit, position your infant comfortably on your lap, and introduce a book. With an older infant, offer a couple of books and ask which one he or she wants to read (depending on your child's level of understanding, they may — or may not — choose a book). Have several other books nearby to keep your reading time uninterrupted.

Give your child time to handle the book before you open it up. Infants may grasp it, turn it over, open and close it, drop it on the floor, or put it in their mouth, which are all normal behaviors and necessary steps in their book learning. In fact, you could make the process of exploring the book an activity (without even reading the book to your child). If you'd like to read the book, let your child continue exploring the book while you choose another book to read.

As you look at a book together, slowly read the words or simply talk about the pictures (let your child hold the book if he or she wants to). If there are things to feel, guide your child's hand to the interesting textures on the pages and describe each texture. Older infants may explore textures in a book independently (without needing your guidance) and may spend more time looking

# INFANTS

at the pictures or “talking” by babbling or saying simple words. When you and your infant are ready to move on to the next page, encourage your child to help you turn the page.

Note: When infants explore books independently, they may hold the book upside down. At this developmental stage, infants are not as concerned with looking at the pictures as they are with the process of looking through a book and turning the pages. As infants have more experiences with books, they will become more interested in looking at the pictures and will hold the book right-side up.



## *Early Math and Discovery:* **Cool Tool**

If you are nursing or feeding your infant a bottle, position yourself in a comfortable chair. If your infant is older and experienced at eating baby cereal or other types of food, secure your child in their highchair and sit in a nearby chair.

As you prepare to nurse or give your infant a bottle, notice how your infant responds by turning their head in the direction of the milk. Older infants will place their hand on your breast or reach both hands to hold on to the bottle. For older infants, choose a spoon designed for infants. Infants may be a bit clumsy at getting the food to their mouth with a spoon; alleviate some of this frustration by feeding your hungry infant most of the food, before handing over the spoon. Place the spoon in your infant’s hand, demonstrate how to scoop, guide the spoon and food to your child’s mouth, and describe what you are doing. Then give your child a chance to use the spoon. Remember that your child might explore the spoon in different ways (e.g., put it in their mouth [without any food on it], throw it on the floor, or put it in their hair) without using it for its intended purpose. These are all normal ways that an infant explores an object. Describe what your child is doing (e.g., you might say, “You’re using the spoon to pound on your tray”).

Children experience:

- Responding to an object
- Exploring a tool in their play

If your infant’s attempts to use the spoon aren’t immediately successful, your child might simply pick up the pieces of food. If this happens, keep in mind that it takes young children time and experience to learn how to handle tools and for their muscles and coordination to develop enough to manipulate tools successfully. When your child is successful, encourage him or her (e.g., you might say, “You scooped up the carrots with the spoon and put them in your mouth!”)



## *Myself and Others:* **Playing with Piggies**

Children experience:

- Putting their fingers, thumbs, or foot in their own mouth
- Awareness of self by indicating something is theirs

Place your infant on their back (on a soft blanket on the floor, on a bed or changing table, or in a bouncy seat). An older infant can be sitting up (on the floor, in a highchair, or in the bathtub).

Lean in close, massage and kiss your infant’s hands and feet, and say something like “I’m going to find your toes.” If your child is wearing socks,

# INFANTS

pull them off, massage their feet a bit more, and give your child's toes a few more kisses. The tactile experience of having one's feet and toes exposed to the air, massaged, rubbed, and kissed could be an activity in itself, so give your child plenty of time to enjoy the experience before moving on. Wriggle each toe on one foot (beginning with the big toe), and recite the nursery rhyme "This Little Piggy," moving to the next toe with each line of the rhyme:

This little piggy went to market. This little piggy went home.  
This little piggy had roast beef. This little piggy had none.  
And this little piggy went wee, wee, wee, wee all the way home.

Traditionally, this nursery rhyme ends with adults tickling children's feet during the "wee, wee, wee, wee" part of the rhyme. In addition to tickling your child's foot while reciting that part of the rhyme, move your fingers up your child's legs and onto their stomach. Repeat the rhyme and activity on your child's other foot, and continue by alternating feet until your infant loses interest.



## *Physical Development and Healthy Habits: Pick It Up*

Observe how your child uses their hands and fingers. Note that your child's ability to handle toys depends on their age, developmental level, and prior experiences.

Offer your child one or two objects to hold (too many choices can be overwhelming), understanding that they may only hold the object for a short time before letting it fall. Be sure to give the object back to your child to let them try to hold it again. With practice, children will begin grasping objects with their whole hand for longer time periods. As children develop, they'll be able to reach for a toy, pick it up, bring it to their mouth, and then transfer a toy from one hand to the other. Many infants like to drop an object from a highchair on to the floor, look at it, and wait for an adult to pick it up. Play this game with your child (although you may quickly grow tired of it!), because it is an important part of your child's development and gives them invaluable opportunities to practice grasping and handling objects.

Children experience:

- Opening and closing their hands
- Using small muscles to handle or pick up objects

As infants develop, they'll be able to pick up smaller objects, first by sliding their thumb to the side of their index finger and later by using their thumb and finger in a pincer grasp. This skill often develops at about the same time children are ready to eat finger food. Offer children small amounts of finger food so they aren't tempted to put too much food in their mouth at one time. Although it may be tempting to feed infants yourself to avoid messes, let them feed themselves finger foods so they can develop their fine-motor skills.

# TODDLERS



## *Art, Music and Movement:* **Leader of the Band**

Encourage your toddler to make music with the instrument in various ways. Copy your child's actions with your instrument, and describe what you are doing to help your child's awareness of and confidence in his or her ideas. Model another way to play the instrument (e.g., fast, slow, quietly), and describe what you are doing (e.g., "You're tapping yours really fast; I'm going to try tapping mine slowly"). This helps children think about new and different ways to use their bodies and materials. After some time playing with the instrument, invite your child to make a parade around the room or other open space. Allow your child to be the leader and choose where to go.

### Children experience:

- Moving their bodies in various ways
- Initiating and copying movements

### Ideas for homemade instruments:

- Use recycled coffee cans, boxes with lids, oatmeal canisters, or small bowls or baskets as drums that children can bang on with their hands or with kitchen utensils (e.g., wooden spoons, spatulas).
- Put a few small items (e.g., beads, rocks) in a recycled plastic water or soda bottle and secure its cap to create shakers.
- Use metal bowls or pans that children tap on with whisks, spoons, plastic forks, or plastic combs for chimes.
- Give children two metal lids or two metal pie tins to use as cymbals.



## *Communication, Language, and Literacy:* **Listen Up!**

### Children experience:

- Responding to your voice in a variety of ways
- Responding nonverbally to simple statements or requests

Place younger infants on their back on a blanket on the floor, a changing table, or a bed. Older infants can sit independently (on the floor or in another place). If your infant is lying on their back, begin talking by saying something like "It feels good to stretch out on your back and kick your legs!" Model conversation patterns by pausing in between sentences, which gives your infant time to explore your facial expressions, process your words and the inflection of your voice, and conjure up a response.

Your child may respond to your voice by establishing eye contact, smiling, or cooing.

Try moving to the opposite side from which your child is looking and say your child's name to see if he or she responds. Make a game of it, and move to the other side of your infant to see if your child moves their head to find your voice.

If you give infants frequent opportunities to hear language (called receptive language), they will begin to understand some of your words. Try playing a game by saying something like "I'm going to touch your nose!" and then pause. If your infant doesn't respond (by wrinkling or touching their nose), touch their nose and say "I found your nose!" If your infant does touch their nose, you'll know that he or she understands and is ready to continue playing (i.e., by replacing "nose" with "toes").



# TODDLERS



## Early Math and Discovery: A “Pairfect” Match

Tell your child that you will need help with the laundry today. Put all the socks in one pile, and say something like “All of our socks are mixed up, and I need your help. Can you tell which of these socks belong together?”

Allow your child to closely examine the socks and hold them up together. Your child might find socks that match, socks that are the same color but a different length, socks that are the same length but a different color, or your child may simply play with the socks. Describe what your child is doing while identifying characteristics of the socks. For example, you might say, “You found two short white socks; that’s a match!” or “You found a short black sock and a long black sock; I wonder if you can find two black socks that are both short” or “You’re exploring the pile of socks. I see a red sock, a yellow sock, and a blue sock.” Simply pointing out the socks’ characteristics will increase your child’s awareness of and vocabulary for similarities and differences.

### Children experience:

- Matching socks based on color and other attributes
- Noticing similarities and differences



## Myself and Others: Thinking Backwards

### Children experience:

- Returning to an object of interest
- Pointing to or showing something they played with

As you and your children play together, pay attention to what toy or object they favor and what they do with it. Gathering information like this will help you support your toddlers as they begin to develop the ability to form and hold images in their mind.

Call attention to your toddler’s developing ability to remember where something of interest is located. For example, when your child returns to a sippy cup, you might say, “You left your sippy cup on the couch before nap time. You remembered where it was!” Older toddlers may point to or show you something they played with, and, eventually, will be able to tell you something they did soon after the event has taken place. To support these developing skills, talk to your toddlers as they play, imitate their actions, and comment on what you are each doing.

# TODDLERS



## *Physical Development and Healthy Habits: Follow the Leader*

Start the activity by singing a simple, familiar song or use a familiar tune and sing something like this (to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”):

March, march, march your feet as we sing this song.

March, march, march your feet as we sing this song.

March your feet as you sing.

### Children experience:

- Trying out different physical movements
- Making suggestions to others about how to move
- Copying the ideas of others

Ask your child to show you (if nonverbal) or tell you (if verbal) another way to move. Give your child time to think, decide, and display a movement and then copy and name their idea (e.g., “You’re wiggling your hips”). Continue to sing the song from the beginning by changing the words to match the actions (e.g., “Wiggle, wiggle, wiggle your hips as we sing this song”) or simply copy your child’s movement. Try out several ideas, ask your child for input, and offer other suggestions of ways to move. Do this activity in one place (e.g., marching in one place), or, alternatively, move around an open space (e.g., marching around in a circle).

# TODDLERS



## *Art, Music and Movement:* **No-Worry Painting**

Set up a child-sized easel outdoors on a flat surface. Pour a small amount of paint into two cups, place one cup on the easel tray, and put the other one to the side for later. Attach a piece of paper to the easel. Fill up a bucket with water and gather some towels so you are ready for cleanup.

Dress yourself and your toddler in playclothes. Show your child how to dip the paintbrush into the paint cup and brush the paint onto the paper. If your toddler is more interested in exploring just the paint let your child use their fingers to paint on paper. Older toddlers may try using a paintbrush but will need practice. As they learn how to control the paintbrush, they'll begin to make discrete marks on the paper and may notice that making different movements with their arms produces different lines and marks. Describe your child's movements while talking about the marks created. Before ending the activity, try introducing a new color of paint or another paintbrush. If you've introduced two primary colors, talk to your child about how the colors change.

### Children experience:

- Exploring art materials
- Using art materials to make discrete marks

**Hint:** For children who are beginning walkers or aren't used to standing for long periods of time, place paper on the ground and secure it with heavy rocks or tape (instead of using an easel).



## *Communication, Language, and Literacy:* **Write Away**

### Children experience:

- Making marks and scribbles
- Writing letterlike forms

Cover your table, and make sure your child is safely seated. Place a piece of paper in front of your child (you can tape the paper onto the table so it doesn't slide). Let your child choose which color marker or crayon to use. (Toddlers often have more success with writing with a marker because they don't have to press as hard to make a mark.) If this is your child's first time using a writing tool, you may need to show them how to use the marker/crayon and help take the cap off of the marker (note that marker caps may be a choking hazard).

Younger toddlers may simply make random marks on their papers. While this might not seem significant, this exploratory stage is a very valuable step in their development of learning how to write. Keep in mind that it is common for toddlers to put items (e.g., crayons) in their mouths. If your child does this, offer a gentle reminder that crayons and markers are for writing on paper. Demonstrate on your piece of paper how to make marks with a marker/crayon. Talk about what your child is doing, and use your own writing tool to imitate your child's actions. Hang up your child's creations at toddler-height.

# TODDLERS



## *Early Math and Discovery:* **A Walk in the Park**

Find an area for you and your children to walk and explore (e.g., a paved pathway, an open grassy area, a short trail through the woods, or an area near a pond). Plan for this activity to be a relaxed stroll, as naturally curious toddlers will enjoy finding objects to pick up and examine. As long as the objects of interest are safe, encourage your child to explore them. As your younger toddler does this, name the objects and briefly comment on them (e.g., “You found a rock. It looks heavy!”).

### Children experience:

- Exploring natural objects or materials
- Naming objects

Older toddlers may begin naming different objects they see. To try to understand the new things they are seeing, children add to their new experiences the knowledge they already have. For example, children might say “Doggy” when they see a squirrel. Understanding this part of toddlers’ development will allow you to help your children make sense of the new information they are receiving. You might respond to your toddler with something like “It looks like a dog because it’s running across the grass. That’s called a squirrel.” Expand your child’s language and knowledge by adding more information, for example, “The squirrel is furry and has a long tail like our doggy at home, but he climbs trees...watch!”



## *Myself and Others:* **Just Another Ordinary Day**

### Children experience:

- Indicating the end of an event
- Anticipating the next event in a familiar sequence

Pay attention to natural routines that you’ve already established with your toddler (e.g., have dinner, take a bath, read a book before bed). Establishing a consistent yet flexible order of daily activities provides comfort, security, and a reassuring predictability for children. However, be cognizant of other events that might alter your routine (e.g., your child is interested in watching a garbage truck). These moments are filled with opportunities for language and learning so be sure to take advantage of

them!

Once you’ve developed a routine that works, try to follow that routine consistently. Label each time of the day for your child (e.g., “It’s lunchtime!”). When you follow a routine, you’ll find that your child will begin to predict what part comes next. If you think that your toddler knows the sequence of your routine, ask them what comes next (e.g., “Bath is all done. Do you know what we’re going to do next?”).

Establish a routine for ending activities by giving a warning for cleanup time (e.g., singing a song to let your child know that cleanup time is approaching).

# TODDLERS



## *Physical Development and Healthy Habits: **Poke, Pull, Squish***

Give your toddler time to explore a mound of play dough. Imitate your child's actions, and introduce new vocabulary words to describe what your child is doing or experiencing (e.g., squishy, poke, flat, heavy, and salty).

Observe how your child plays with the dough. If your child pokes it, offer other items that are good for poking (e.g., Popsicle sticks, plastic pegs). If your child pulls it apart, provide a plastic bowl or cup to fill with play dough pieces. If your child pounds the dough, offer a lightweight wooden/plastic hammer. Use your mound of play dough and other materials in the same way your child is using them and describe what you are doing.

### Children experience:

- Using the small muscles in their hands and fingers
- Hearing new vocabulary words

# PRESCHOOL



## *Art, Music and Movement:* **Family Song Book**

Share with your children one of your favorite songs or ask your child to sing a favorite song of theirs to you. Tell children that you want to create a book that includes all of their favorite songs. Have children write each of their favorite songs down on a separate piece of paper as you do the same. If they can't write all the words, you can help them or just let them write one word to stand for the song. Even young toddlers have favorite songs, so draw simple pictures to represent songs they enjoy. For example, if they like the "Itsy Bitsy Spider", then draw a spider on the page. Then, let them decorate each song page to make the pages colorful. If they aren't able to write the complete title of the song, encourage them to draw pictures or designs that help them remember what the song is. Once all the pages have been decorated, punch holes in them and put them in the binder or simply put them in a folder. You could even record children singing and performing their songs and play it for them again later so they can sing along with it.

### Children experience:

- Drawing
- Singing
- Writing



## *Communication, Language, and Literacy:* **Alphabet Clue Game**

### Children experience:

- Alphabetic knowledge

Tell children that you're going to give them a clue and they are going to have to guess what it is you're drawing. Draw one line of a letter at a time, asking children to guess which letter it will be. Answer children with comments, as in the following steps for guessing the letter R:

1. Draw a straight vertical line. Then say something like, "Well this could be an L because L has a tall straight line, but I'm thinking of a different letter."
2. Next, draw the curved part at the top. Then, say something like: "This sure looks like a P, doesn't it? But I'm not done making the letter I'm thinking of."
3. Then say something like, "I'll draw one more short line (draw bottom diagonal line). Can you tell me what it is now?"

For younger children, use letters they are most familiar with, including the letter their first or last name starts with. This game can also be adapted for any drawing you might start drawing, like a face or a bird. For older children, you can ask them to guess a whole word, watching you write one letter at a time, or you can ask the child to do the writing and you can do the guessing!

# PRESCHOOL



## *Math, Science, and Technology:* **Measure Me!**

Take a piece of yarn and stretch it out from children's head to their toes. Cut the yarn. Tape the yarn to a wall, taping at the bottom so it is in a straight line. Label the yarn with the children's names. Use the yarn to show children how tall they are! Then, tell children that they are going to go on a hunt around the house to find out how long or tall other things are. Let children choose the things they want to measure. Make sure they have a standard measuring tool, such as a ruler, yard stick, or tape measure. Help them count the number of inches or feet of the objects they find. Then, measure a piece of yarn the same length as the object they measure and cut it. Tape it to the wall at the top and bottom next to the yard that shows their height. Label the yarn with masking tape to indicate what object it is.

### Children experience:

- Measuring
- Comparing Sizes
- Cutting
- Numbers

When children have finished measuring, make observations about their results including:

- "The \_\_\_\_\_ is the longest object you measure."
- "The \_\_\_\_\_ is the shortest."

And ask questions to prompt a discussion including:

- How could we reorganize the pieces of yarn? (shortest to longest, longest to shortest)
- What was your favorite object to measure?

For younger children, don't use the ruler and just ask them to find something big or small. For older children, ask them to write down the measurement of the objects they measure.



## *Myself and Others:* **Feeling Cube**

### Children experience:

- Understanding and expressing feelings
- Reading

We all have our ups and downs and children are no different! Helping them express their feelings and emotions can go a long way toward keeping your household calm. Start by making a feelings cube for children. Tape pictures (pictures of family members, magazine clippings, or images found online) of people expressing a variety of different emotions to a small box.

Then, read a book about feelings with your child. Here are a few recommendations:

- *Miss Spider's Tea Party*, by David Kirk
- *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, by Judith Viorst

# PRESCHOOL

- *The teacher from the Black Lagoon*, by Mike Thaler and Jared Lee
- *My Many Colored Days*, by Dr. Suess
- *When Sophie Gets Angry*, by Molly Bang

After reading the story, go back to the pages and review what happened. Ask questions like:

- “Do you remember what happened on this page?”
- “Why do you think the character was feeling so \_\_\_\_?”
- “Do you like or dislike this story? Why?”

After you have talked about the story, show children the feelings cube. Tell them you are going to let them roll the cube and that, whatever face it lands on, they have to show the same face! Take a turn as well and really exaggerate the look on your face! As children make a face, use feeling words to describe what you see. For younger children, use words they are familiar with, such as: “Oh, you look sad.” For older children, use this as an opportunity to develop new vocabulary such as, “You look depressed or concerned.” Guide the conversation to talk about how to handle that emotion in an appropriate way such as talking about the feeling. End by singing, “When you’re happy and you know it!” For older children you can turn this into a daily practice where they create “My Journal” and write or draw their feelings for the day.



## *Physical Development and Healthy Habits:* **Bean Bag Toss**

Have children warm up their throwing arm by doing simple exercises, such as windmills and shoulder rolls. Give children a sponge and set up the box a few feet away. Tell children to try throwing their sponge into the box. Then place several more boxes around them or just in a line and see if children can throw the sponge into each box. You can offer different items for children to throw, like balls, small pillows, bean bags, or a sock rolled up. Move the boxes closer or farther away to make the activity challenging and fun, but not frustrating. Take turns throwing into the boxes. Show excitement when children get their sponge in a box, and provide guiding questions or comments when they don't.

Children experience:

- Throwing
- Eye-hand coordination

Offer comments like “Can you think of another way to throw your sponge?” or “Last time you got it in when you slowed down and took a breath before throwing.” For younger children, give children larger, open containers like laundry baskets and place containers closer to children. For older children, you can use alternative containers like laundry baskets or mixing bowls. Or, you can assign a number to each container and ask children to write down the number each time they successfully throw into that basket.



# PRESCHOOL



## *Art, Music and Movement:* **Bookmarks**

Show children any examples you might have of bookmarks. If you don't have any, explain that people use something called a bookmark to hold their place in a book, rather than bending down a page or losing their spot. Show them the strips of paper and say this is what bookmarks usually look like. Put out the markers and art supplies and tell them they can decorate their bookmark any way they would like.

### Children experience:

- Creative Art
- Writing

As they decorate the bookmark, make encouraging comments like "Oh, I see you are using a lot of colors" or "Tell me about your drawing." When they are finished decorating a bookmark, cover it in contact paper to preserve the art work and lengthen the life of the bookmark.

Ask your children if they would like to read or look at one of their favorite books. When they are done, ask them if they would like to mark the page of their favorite picture or simply place the bookmark in the book to be ready for the next time!



## *Communication, Language, and Literacy:* **Book Nooks**

### Children experience:

- Reading
- Alphabetic knowledge
- Book knowledge
- Bonding with a familiar adult

Tell children about your favorite book and when the story it tells takes place. Or read a simple story and explain that where it takes place is called the *setting*.

Next, say something like "Let's get some of your favorite books and take them to a new setting!" Let children pick where they would like to go. Here are some location ideas that might help you get moving:

- Under a table
- In the bathtub, during bath time
- Under a blanket
- Near a tree
- In the car (books on tape/CD are great fun)
- Someplace to read with a pet

Give children the option of choosing a new place to read every time they begin a new book.

# PRESCHOOL



## *Math, Science, and Technology:* **Carrots and Celery**

Beginning:

You'll be cutting carrots and celery several different ways. If your children are old enough, let them help cut. Carrots should be cut in circles, half circles, or long sticks. Celery should be cut in long sticks and half moons.

As you cut each shape, place one of the pieces in a bowl. Then tell children to scoop up the rest and put them in the correct bowl. They will be matching the shape in the bowl to the shape of the vegetable in their hands. Once all the vegetables have been cut, get out two plates or cookie sheets. Put a few vegetable shapes on your plate and ask an open-ended question like "What do you think I could make with all these shapes?" Listen to children's responses and build on their ideas. If they say to make a flower, then make a flower! Encourage them to take some pieces and talk about what they are going to make. Be sure to point out the different shapes they are using or shapes they are making with the individual food pieces. You might say something like "Oh, I see you made a big circle using all the little carrot circles!" Then have fun eating your veggie creations!

Children experience:

- Making Shapes
- Healthy Habits
- Geometry
- Personal Care
- Matching Shapes



## *Myself and Others:* **Pet Rock**

Children experience:

- Art
- Creativity
- The natural and physical world
- Making plans and following through on them

You can take your children to a gardening center and let them pick their favorite rock, or simply purchase one in advance. Put out all of the materials and tell your children that they are going to create their own pet rock.

Encourage your children to plan out their project. See if they can describe how they want their rock to look before they begin decorating. Ask your children to pick out the materials they would like to use before they begin decorating. Let your children create their own pet rock using the materials you have set out. Let the activity continue until children are finished creating their pet.

# PRESCHOOL



## *Physical Development and Healthy Habits:* **Obstacle Course**

Ahead of time, lay out all the areas for the obstacle course. Gather children at the beginning of the course and explain they will do something at each station. Walk them to each station in the order they should follow the course. Show and tell them what they will do.

Here are some ideas for an indoor obstacle course:

- Slide around the kitchen in your socks four times
- Crawl under the bed two times
- Dance like crazy in the dining room
- Jump up and down in the living room five times
- Lie on the couch for 20 seconds and pretend to be asleep
- Go to the bathroom and wash your hands

Here are some ideas for an outside obstacle course:

- Run two laps around the yard
- Jump over a stick or rock ten times
- Fly like a bird with your wings, flapping seven times around the yard

Take children back to the starting point and say "go!" Watch them do the obstacle course. Have children run to each activity station and pick up any items they may have used.

### Children experience:

- Moving his or her body in many different ways
- Building gross-motor skills
- Cooperative play
- Following directions



# MORE RESOURCES



## Cosmic Kids Yoga

Find yoga and mindfulness activities channel for kids 3+

[www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga](http://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga)



## San Diego Zoo Kids Videos

See live feeds of some amazing animals, and find great activities from the zookeepers.

<https://kids.sandiegozoo.org/videos>



## Time for 10!

Get your children moving with these fun exercise videos.

[www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/health-wellness-and-safety-resources/resources-for-parents-and-kids/time-for-10/time-for-10-videos](http://www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/health-wellness-and-safety-resources/resources-for-parents-and-kids/time-for-10/time-for-10-videos)



## Sesame Street

There are wonderful games, videos, and art projects for young children, featuring their favorite characters.

[www.sesamestreet.org/](http://www.sesamestreet.org/)



## Cooking with Kids

Meal prep can be learned and play time as well if you work together.

[www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/packages/recipes-for-kids/cooking-with-kids](http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/packages/recipes-for-kids/cooking-with-kids)



# MORE RESOURCES



## **Kid-Fit Preschool Music & Workouts**

Get moving with some great tunes and exercises.

[www.kidfitmusic.org/](http://www.kidfitmusic.org/)



## **Lunch Doodles with Mo Willems**

Connect with your artistic side as Mo Willems guides you through some fun drawing activities.

[www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=%23MoLunchDoodles](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=%23MoLunchDoodles)



## **Ms. Jenny from the HighScope Demonstration Preschool reads *Silly Sally* by Audrey Wood**

Enjoy a wonderful story time with a great character.

[www.vimeo.com/399264225](https://www.vimeo.com/399264225)



## **Live Story Time with COR Advantage: *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish* by Dr. Seuss**

Wednesday, March 25th at 11:30 ET. Read by team member Katie! Click here to register:

[www.zoom.us/meeting/register/u5YqcOigqD4r4k9r5GEDqftMP8GNtFFuZQ](https://www.zoom.us/meeting/register/u5YqcOigqD4r4k9r5GEDqftMP8GNtFFuZQ)



## **Whale Activities**

This segment is best suited for older preschoolers, 3.5-5 years old and school age children. Great for anyone who loves whales or wants to learn more!

**COR Advantage Video:** Maranda reads part one of a book called "100 Things You Should Know About Whales & Dolphins" by Steve Parker!

[www.vimeo.com/399201332](https://www.vimeo.com/399201332)

**National Geographic for Kids:** Follow it up with a short video on YouTube about bottlenose dolphins by NatGeo!

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjMn\\_dVCJyA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjMn_dVCJyA)

**Baby Beluga:** Finally, enjoy this sing-along song with Raffi!

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=irQa3UDV\\_AM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irQa3UDV_AM)